Tuesday, December 27, 2011 ★★ 6 sections / Vol. 27 / No. 19 P18 | Mobile Alerts: Text INQ DISASTER to 4407 | www.inquirer.net Twitter: @inquirerdotnet | Philippine Daily Inquirer Twitter: @inquirerph

ENTER THE DRAGON Not exactly the fire-breathing kind, but this green iguana at Malabon Zoo comes close to resembling the mythical creature and could be its next big star, 2012 being the Year of the Water Dragon in the Chinese lunar calendar

Gov't hit for failure to act on flood peril

SLOWLY regaining strength and balance after a devastating calamity, flood victims carrying relief goods head back to evacuation centers in Iligan City.

Cabinet ignored scientists' warning

By Fernando del Mundo

BARELY a month into the Aquino presidency, green activists warned Cabinet officials of a looming climatic catastrophe.

The warning went largely ignored, but the Climate Change Congress of the Philippines (CCCP) headed by Archbishop Antonio Ledesma plodded on, raising alarm bells.

The warning was repeated to Cabinet officials in an anniversary conference two weeks before Tropical Storm "Sendong" struck on Dec. 16.

Officials on the ground were caught unprepared as the howler stomped from the normal typhoon corridor and turned its wrath on the largest and widely denuded watershed in Northern Mindanao.

The deaths and destruction in the storm rampage and the flash floods it ignited surpassed anything the world has seen in the past 12 years, according to a US meteorologist.

Swaths of impoverished urban settlements mainly from the hard-hit cities of Cagayan de Oro (CDO) and Iligan disappeared in the deadly brown torrents of slime and mud. Frothy cut timbers from the Lanao mountains tumbled and smashed communities in the lowlands.

The official death toll has reached 1,200 and around 2,000 are missing—more than the 982 people who perished in the storm in Brazil in January, or the 657 who died in massive floods in Thailand in the past

DON'T MISS

CHIEF Justice Corona

Corona to Senate: Dismiss complaint

By Marlen Ramos

CHIEF JUSTICE Renato Corona yesterday said the Senate should dismiss the articles of impeachment filed against him by the House of Representatives, claiming that the move to convict him was the "handiwork" of President Aquino and the ruling Liberal Party.

In a 79-page reply to the House's charges, Corona reiterated some of his remarks in an earlier combative speech before his supporters at the Supreme Court compound, wherein he described his

CORONA/A6

Tent cities rise in N. Mindanao

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—With safe areas for resettlement still being sought, tens of thousands of flood survivors face life in tent cities for months.

More than 60,000 people displaced by Tropical Storm "Sendong" (International name: Washi) are sheltering in government buildings here and in Iligan City, most of them in schools that will reopen after the holidays, according to Benito Ramos, executive director of the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council.

"We can't construct permanent shelters for them immediately. It will take some time. They have to move into tents when schools reopen on Jan. 3," Ramos told Agence France-Presse yesterday.

President Aquino has authorized the release of an additional P5 billion for core and emergency shelter assistance for Sendong victims in Mindanao.

TENTS/A11

Read-along cheers up poor kids

By Yolanda Sotelo
Inquirer Northern Luzon
and Jo Martinez-Clemente
Inquirer Central Luzon

LALAINE NIEVES, 46, a Grade II teacher at Dinap Sur Elementary School in the coastal town of Boni in Pangasinan, is often moved to tears whenever she recounts how she trekked through mountains each day just to attend classes as a child.

"It was through sheer perseverance that I finished my schooling," said Nieves, who lives in the fishing village of Olanen in Boni.

"The pupils are in a better situation now as there is already a

ENQUIRER.NET

If these mothers can't find it, they'll invent it

EIGHT years ago, Tamara Moncrieff came up with an invention that she was sure mothers like herself would appreciate: a device that prevents children from overusing toilet paper from the roll.

Moncrieff, however, had no idea how to transform the concept into a marketable product.

When she turned to the Internet, "There was nothing—no road maps...no anything," recalls Moncrieff, who lives near San Francisco and served as education di-

ETHNIC/A3

Second FRONTPAGE

WEATHER FORECAST

Metro Manila	Mostly cloudy	Mostly cloudy
Baguio	Mostly cloudy	Mostly cloudy
Dagupan	Mostly cloudy	Mostly cloudy
Laoag	Mostly cloudy	Mostly cloudy
Tuguegarao	Mostly cloudy	Mostly cloudy
Iba	Mostly cloudy	Mostly cloudy
Clark	Mostly cloudy	Mostly cloudy
Tagaytay	Mostly cloudy	Mostly cloudy
Legazpi	Mostly cloudy	Mostly cloudy
Virac	Mostly cloudy	Mostly cloudy
Catarman	Mostly cloudy	Mostly cloudy
Iloilo	Mostly cloudy	Mostly cloudy
Cebu	Mostly cloudy	Mostly cloudy
Tacloban	Mostly cloudy	Mostly cloudy
Dipolog	Mostly cloudy	Mostly cloudy
Davao	Mostly cloudy	Mostly cloudy
Cagayan de Oro	Mostly cloudy	Mostly cloudy
Zamboanga	Mostly cloudy	Mostly cloudy
General Santos	Mostly cloudy	Mostly cloudy

2 P.M.

1	19 20
2	4 14
3	29 18

SUERTRES

2 P.M.	9 9 5
5 P.M.	5 2 1
9 P.M.	3 1 0

ULTRA 6/58

	7 4 3 3

MEGALOTTO 6/45

9 12 35 37 39 41

P15,379,585.20

6/55 GRAND LOTTO

3 20 22 26 27 44

P56,149,004.80

LOTTO 3D/2D Tues 6D LOTTO, next in 6/42: P1.5 million

Palparan sends surrender feelers

KIDS-SAFE NOISEMAKERS

Children of the Makiisa pa'ah display different sounds of noisemakers—all "kids-safe" and non-toxic substitutes for firecrackers—in front of the Philippine Earthside (Clare Nico Pineda in support of the Ban Your Water Cauldron's "Iwas Paputok" drive on the commitment to begin the New Year's Day celebration. The coalition also recommends laughing on top of one's lungs, jiggling piggy banks and playing toot music to welcome the New Year. MELANIE MARQUEZ

By Marlon Ramos

RETIRED Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan Jr. sent surrender feelers to the Department of Justice a week after he went into hiding following his indictment for the disappearance of two University of the Philippines students in 2006, Justice Secretary Leila de Lima said on Monday.

"There were surrender feelers, but there is no indication of the exact date of the surrender," De Lima told reporters. "The manifestation is ongoing because surrenders have not materialized yet."

Asked for details, she said, "It's from him, but not directly from him. It was through an emissary."

Butcher

Tagged by activists as "Butcher" (butcher) for his alleged role in extrajudicial killings, Palparan went into hiding after a regional trial court in Malolos, Bulacan, on Nov. 19 ordered his arrest for kidnapping and illegal detention in connection with disappearances of Karen Empeño and Sherlyn Cadapan.

Judge Teodoro Gonzales of RTC Branch 14 issued the arrest warrant against Palparan along with Lt. Col. Felipo Anonuevo Jr., 1Lt. Rizal Hilario and S/Sgt. Edgardo Osorio. A Malolos police order has also been issued against them to prevent them from leaving the country.

Anonuevo and Osorio have since been arrested and detained at the Philippine National Police headquarters in Camp Crame.

De Lima said the win not to discuss today with Interior Secretary Jesse Robredo the possibility of offering cash reward to hasten the arrest of Palparan and Hilario, for supposed right-hand man.

"I just need to talk to Robredo about the reward if nothing happens until Tuesday morning," she said.

Loyalty to Palparan

"I think if Palparan surrenders, then Hilario will follow suit. If Hilario surrenders, then Palparan will follow," De Lima said, but does not believe Palparan's loyalty.

The justice secretary said there was an indication that Palparan had left the country since he was off-loaded from a Singapore-bound flight at Ninoy Aquino International Airport in Clark Field, Pampanga, last week.

"I believe he is still in the country. Otherwise, he won't send surrender feelers. There were reported sightings (of him) in Luzon, but they were not validated," she said.

Coddling a fugitive

De Lima also warned that individuals helping Palparan evade arrest may be charged for coddling a fugitive from justice.

"No always, they will have liability under the law. It's public knowledge that he is a fugitive because he has an outstanding warrant of arrest," she said.

The National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) has sent subpoenas to former Palparan, who is the Bantay party-list representative, but NBI director Nestor Mantaring said Lands told the bureau that the officer had not yet posed "negative."

The Armed Forces of the Philippines has announced it is also joining the hunt for its retired general.

Efre Obido, lawyer of the families of the missing students, welcomed the military's participation in the hunt.

Cynicism

"There are those that are professional and they think this is a good opportunity for them to disprove the long-standing cynicism of people that they pretend their trust," Obido said in a phone interview.

"More than improving the image [of the armed forces], it's the consistency of respecting human rights, and it is a good start if they help in the surrender of General Palparan. And it should be followed through consistently," he said.

Obido, who is also the secretary general of the National Union of People's Lawyers, said he and many others were getting impatient that Palparan still hadn't been captured, even though he was already caught on camera leaving the country.

With reports from Inquirer.net's Amabelle and Leila B. Salaverria

SWS SURVEY

Gov't treatment of GMA fair, 7 of 10 Pinoys think

ARROYO

THE ARROYO government's treatment of former President and now Pampanga Rep. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo regarding the cases she is facing is fair, 7 out of 10 Filipinos (69 percent) said in the latest survey of the Social Weather Stations (SWS).

The results (Quarter Social Monitor Report) also said that 17 percent of respondents believed government had been "too harsh," while 13 percent said government had been "too lenient."

Arroyo spent Christmas at Veterans Memorial Medical Center in Quezon City, where she is detained on nonbailable electoral sabotage charges.

The survey asked respondents to complete the following statement: "When it [sic] spoken about the administration's treatment of former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo regarding the cases that she is facing? Would you say that the treatment of the administration has been ..."

Three options

They were presented with three options: "Too harsh," "too lenient" and "only fair."

The survey also found that nearly three of four adult Filipinos (73 percent) had "little trust" in Arroyo. With only 11 percent expressing "much trust" in her, Arroyo's net trust rating plunged to a "very bad" minus 62 (much trust minus little trust). Arroyo's trust ratings in March and September were minus 46 (16 percent much trust, 59 percent little trust) and minus 47 (15 percent much trust, 62 percent little trust), respectively.

The new level is lower than Arroyo's "record low" of minus 52 (36 percent much trust, 88 percent little trust) posted in December last year, according to the survey, whose results were first reported in BusinessWorld on Monday.

Socioeconomic classes

Majorities across areas also believed that the government's treatment of the former President had been "only fair"—79 percent in Mindanao, 76 percent in Metro Manila, 66 percent in Balance Luzon and 58 percent in the Visayas.

Majorities across socioeconomic classes also held a similar view—71 percent among class ABC, 69 percent among class D and 68 percent among class E—to that 73 percent among men and 66 percent among women.

Eighty-two percent among college graduates, 70 percent among high school graduates, 68 percent among elementary graduates, and 63 percent among those who have attended some elementary or no schooling at all also believed that government treatment of Arroyo had been "only fair."

Twenty-four percent in the Visayas, 17 percent in Luzon outside Metro Manila, 15 percent in Mindanao and 10 percent in Metro Manila said the government's treatment of Arroyo had been "too harsh" while 16 percent in Luzon outside Metro Manila, 15 percent in the Visayas, 12 percent in Metro Manila and 7 percent in Mindanao said the government had been "too lenient."

Among class E, 17 percent said government had been "too harsh," along with 16 percent among class D and 15 percent among class ABC. Fourteen percent among class ABC said government had been "too lenient," as did 13 percent among class E and 12 percent among class D.

Little trust

Among those who had "little trust" in Arroyo, 76 percent said government treatment had been "only fair," while 59 percent said government had been "too harsh." Fifty-nine percent of those who had "little trust" in the said government had been "too harsh" on her.

Among those who said government treatment of hers had been "only fair," 73 percent were satisfied with President Aquino, while only 11 percent were dissatisfied. Satisfaction with the President was lower among those who said government had been "too harsh" on Arroyo (48 percent) or "too lenient" (60 percent). SWS also noted.

The survey conducted from Dec. 3 to Dec. 7, used face-to-face interviews with 1,200 adults. It had a margin of error of plus or minus 3 percentage points.

Inquirer Research

Drug trafficking Briton pardoned

By Cathy Yamsuan

PRESIDENT Arroyo granted on Dec. 21 the conditional pardon to British national William Robert Beaton who was convicted of drug-related charges.

He also ordered the commutation of the sentences of four Filipinos convicted of various criminal offenses on Dec. 23.

Press Undersecretary Abigail Valte said the orders to release Beaton, who had been conditional pardon, had already been transmitted to Justice Secretary Leila de Lima and to the director of the Bureau of Corrections and the Board of Pardons and Parole.

Beaton has been required to "take the first available means of transportation to England" after his papers are processed by the Bureau of Immigration.

Beaton, on multiple sides, is empowered to return to the Philippines. Wife said Beaton, whose conviction for drug trafficking earned him a prison term from the Metro Regional Trial Court, still needs to pay 450,000 fine.

Valte said she was "not informed of the reasons" for the pardon given to Beaton or the commutation for the four Filipinos.

Valte also said she was not aware whether other communications would be given before the end of the year.

Cabinet revamp in the works

By Cathy Yamsuan

A PALACE official yesterday hinted at possible changes in government assignments as part of counterinsurgency efforts to improve bureaucratic efficiency.

Press Undersecretary Abigail Valte answered "yes" when asked in a news conference to confirm President Aquino's earlier pronouncement that there would be personnel movements in the Cabinet.

But when asked to elaborate, Valte backtracked and told reporters to wait for the President to make the announcement.

"President Aquino mentioned that there would be personnel movements in the Cabinet, adding that he "gave specific names" but that these persons may or necessarily be Cabinet officials.

Valte said that the President had discussed plans to improve his weak force "few months back."

"The reason he did is that the President is continually assessing how we can improve efficiency and services in government," she explained.

In Lucena City, the Gray Steven Blader Network Alliance (GSBBN), in a Christmas letter to the President Aquino, renewed its call to replace Environment Secretary Roseman Puja for his alleged failure to improve corruption in his department.

"Secretary Puja has been strengthened but found wanting by environmentalist groups. He was also weighed by the Commission on Appointment and he also failed but you reappointed him. How many more hopefuls will come before we accept the truth that the DENR needs to purge to feel good"? Fr. Pete Blasi Allana, SJMSDA chairperson, said in the Dec. 24 letter released to the laymen.

SJMSDA is composed of representatives from indigenous peoples, local communities, environmental lawyers Medley, environmentalists, religious groups and other human protection advocates.

Montalbano noted that Cagayan de Oro Archbishop Antonio Ledesma's most pastoral letter had blamed illegal logging and irresponsible mining as the culprit behind the flash floods that killed more than a thousand people in Cagayan de Oro and Iligan cities.

The Franciscan priest said the bishop's lamentable of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to protect the environment was the reason behind the tragedy.

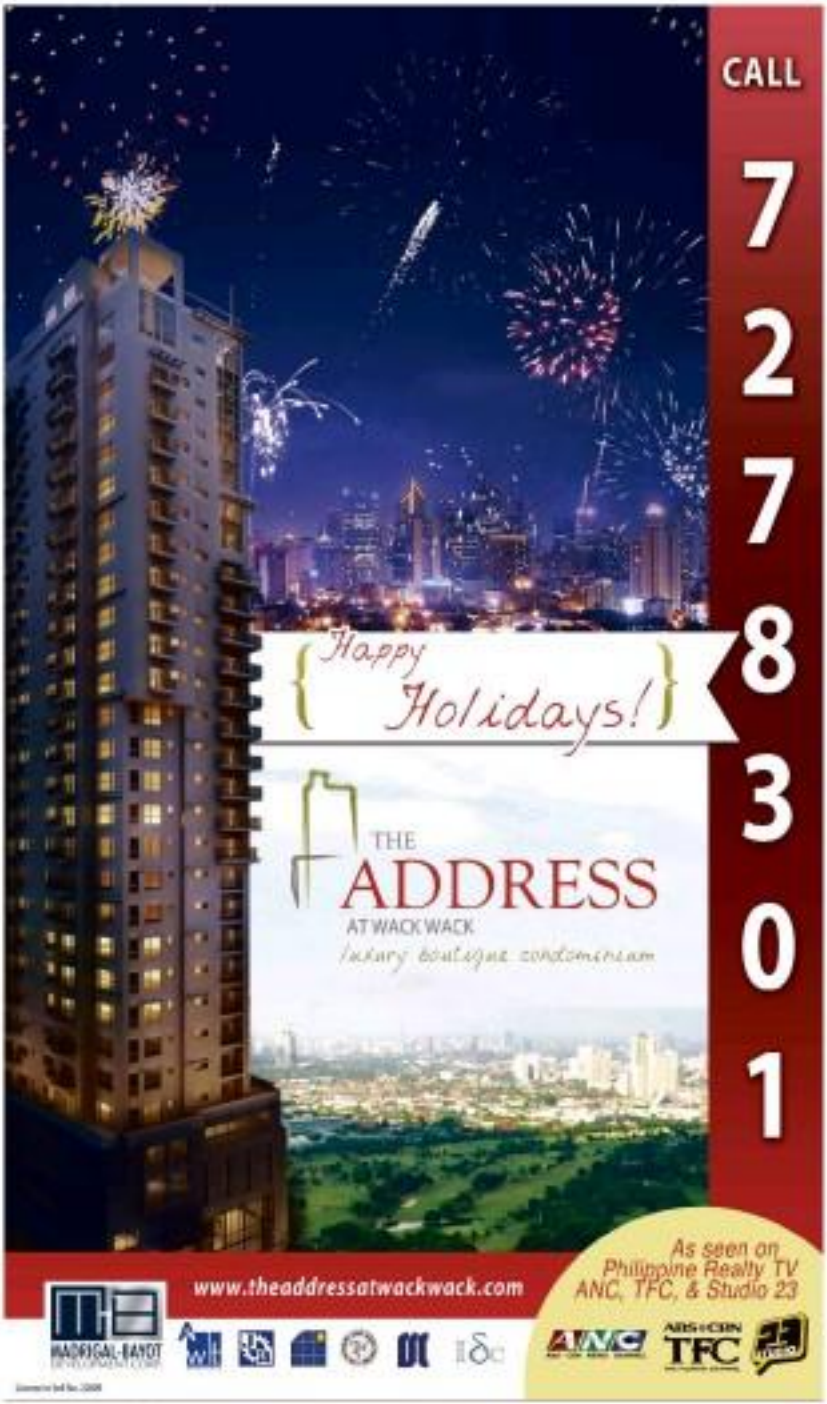
"These logging monstrosities, no moral governing program and total looting of trees all point to Secretary Puja's inefficiency," Montalbano said.

He said many nongovernment organizations would like to help in the protection of the environment but were helpless, adding that in spite of the President's ban, illegal logging was continuing.

With a report from Delfin Mallari Jr., Inquirer Southern Luzon

Dichaves insists on removal from hold departure list

By Lira B. Tabacruza



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(Hereunder is a summary of CGMA's Motion to Recall Warrant of Arrest)

"CGMA WARRANT OF ARREST ISSUED DESPITE THE UTTER ABSENCE OF EVIDENCE"

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
REGIONAL TRIAL COURT
NATIONAL CAPITAL JUDICIAL REGION
Branch 112, Pasay City

PEOPLE OF THE PHILIPPINES,
Plaintiff,

-versus-

CRIM. CASE No. R-PSY-11-00443-CR
FOR: Violation of Section 45 of
R.A. No. 9369 (Election Modernization Act)
of R.A. No. 8046 (Election Code)

CONG. GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO
(FORMER PRESIDENT), SONI ANDAL
(MRS. ELMA), MR., AND ATTY. LIM ANG BUCOY,
Accused.

x----------x

MOTION TO RECALL WARRANT OF ARREST[1]

COMES NOW accused Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo ("Arroyo"), through counsel, and unto this Honorable Court, respectfully moves to recall the Warrant of Arrest issued on November 18, 2011 on the grounds and for the reasons hereinafter stated, with reservation of her supplemental or any other remedy, or relief as may be proper and/or expedient in the premises.

I. Procedural Antecedents of the Issuance of Warrant of Arrest –

On November 18, 2011, a Warrant of Arrest against the accused was issued by the Honorable Court. The Order, of even date, forming probable cause to issue the Warrant of Arrest.

The following, all occurring on November 18, 2011, preceded the issuance of the Warrant of Arrest by the Honorable Court:

11:22 a.m.
Information in Crim. Case No. R-PSY-11-04443-CR, together with its supporting documents was filed by COMELEC with the Office of the Clerk of Court, RTC Pasay City.

11:30 a.m.
Case raffled off to Branch 112

11:45 a.m.
Case docket transmitted to Judge Reyes

2:30 p.m.
Order issued by RTC finding probable cause to issue Warrant of Arrest against CGMA

4:20 p.m.
Warrant of Arrest issued against CGMA

8:20 p.m.
Warrant of Arrest served upon CGMA

II. Supporting Documents Submitted to the RTC in Trias (3) Folders.

3. Pursuant to Section 8(a), Rule 112 of the Rules of Criminal Procedure, copies of evidence supporting the probable cause finding that the offense charged has been committed and that the accused are probably guilty of the crime, which evidence is justify the issuance of Warrant of Arrest

and support the information, dated November 18, 2011, were submitted by the Joint COMELEC-COMELEC Preliminary Investigation Action and Fact Finding Team on the 2004 and 2007 National Elections Electoral Fraud and Manipulation Cases, viz.:

Contained in	No. of Pages
Binder I	450
Binder II	450
Folder	128
CD/DVD	1,000

The Information, dated November 18, 2011, for which Warrant of Arrest was issued, charges the accused with the offense of Electoral Sabotage penalized under Section 45, paragraph (a) of R.A. No. 9369, amending Section 27, paragraph (c) of R.A. No. 8046, as follows:

That the undersigned accuse CONGRESSWOMAN GLORIA MACAPAGAL ARROYO (Former President), SONI ANDAL (MRS. ELMA), and ATTY. LIM ANG BUCOY, (former Vice Chairman of Mapaindenao) for violation of Section 45, paragraph (a) of Republic Act No. 9369 (RA 9369), amending Section 27, paragraph (c) of Republic Act No. 8046, committed as follows:

That on or before the May 14, 2007 National Elections, the accused, CONGRESSWOMAN GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO, then President of the Republic of the Philippines, ANDAL AMPATUAN, SR., then Governor of Maguindanao, and ATTY. LIM ANG BUCOY, then Provincial Election Supervisor (PES) of Maguindanao, all conspiring, confederating and mutually helping one another in order to ensure a "12-0" victory for the senatorial candidates of the "team Unity", did then and there, willfully, feloniously and unlawfully tamper the Provincial Certificate of Canvass of Votes (PCOC) (with Serial No. 8090024, the statement of votes by City/Municipality (SOVM) with Serial No. 0000167 and Summary Statement of Votes (SSOV) with Serial No. 0002348 for the Province of Maguindanao when a few days before the election day during a dinner meeting in Malacanang Palace, accused Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo personally instructed accused Andal Ampatuan, Sr. who was then Governor of Maguindanao, to ensure a "12-0" victory for the senatorial candidates of the "team Unity". Thereafter, accused Andal Ampatuan, Sr. in turn instructed accused Atty. Lim Ang Bucoy who was then the Chairman of the Provincial Board of Canvassers (PBOC) of Maguindanao to tamper the PCOC, SOVM and SSOV by increasing the votes/election returns of the tampered Municipal Certificates of Canvass (MCOCs) submitted by the members of the Municipal Board of Canvassers (MBOCs) of the Province of Maguindanao. The said tampering was done in order to ensure that "12-0" victory for the senatorial candidates of the "team Unity" is realized and that they will indeed win in the imposed "12-0" victory, to wit: the votes that were given to the PCOC, SOVM and SSOV for the twelve (12) senatorial candidates of "team Unity" ranging from as high as 190,107 votes to as low as 86,120 votes, thereby precipitating a landslide victory for the said senatorial candidates over the votes of Loren Legarda, the twelve 12th senatorial candidate of "team Unity", and thereafter, in or about May 23, 2007, accused Atty. Lim Ang Bucoy caused the submission of the tampered PCOC, SOVM and SSOV to the Commission on Elections (COMELEC) Central Office sitting as National Board of Canvassers at the Philippine International Convention Center (PICC) in Pasay City, which is under the jurisdiction of the Honorable Court. Contrary to law.

The voluminous records of this case[2] upon which this Court finds the existence of probable cause against accused[3] consists of thousands of Sinag, Ang Ampatuan and Arroyo pointing to the complicity of the accused Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo with the other accused. Together with only the following election documents:

a. Statement of Votes by City/Municipality for National Positions with Serial No. 0000001 dated May 16, 2007 signed by the Provincial/District Board of Canvassers of Maguindanao:

Atty. Bobby B. Ramos (Chairman)
Atty. Manuel T. Luaton (Vice-Chairman)
Atty. Omar H. Ali (Member-Secretary)

and Tabulators:
Lilian G. Barrientos
Romeo B. Tumbaga

b. Summary of Statement of Votes for National Positions with Serial No. 0002126 dated May 14, 2007 signed by the Provincial/District Board of Canvassers of Maguindanao:

Atty. Bobby B. Ramos (Chairman)
Atty. Manuel T. Luaton (Vice-Chairman)
Atty. Omar H. Ali (Member-Secretary)

and Tabulators:
Lilian G. Barrientos
Romeo B. Tumbaga

c. Provincial/District Certificate of Canvass of Votes for National Positions with Serial No. 0000090 dated May 14, 2007 signed by the Provincial/District Board of Canvassers of North Cotabato:

Atty. Yagie D. Blankiran (Chairman)
Atty. Jesse Agustin B. Ala Guzman (Vice-Chairman)
Dr. Gloria M. Mustacisa (Member-Secretary)

d. Statement of Votes by City/Municipality for National Positions with Serial No. 0000103 dated May 16, 2007 signed by the Provincial/District Board of Canvassers of North Cotabato:

Atty. Yagie D. Blankiran (Chairman)
Atty. Jesse Agustin B. Ala Guzman (Vice-Chairman)
Dr. Gloria M. Mustacisa (Member-Secretary)

e. Statement of Votes by City/Municipality for National Positions with Serial No. 0000103 dated May 16, 2007 signed by the Provincial/District Board of Canvassers of North Cotabato:

Atty. Yagie D. Blankiran (Chairman)
Atty. Jesse Agustin B. Ala Guzman (Vice-Chairman)
Dr. Gloria M. Mustacisa (Member-Secretary)

Spurious in the "voluminous record of this case" can be found the documents the Information charges the accused to have tampered, i.e., "Provincial Certificate of Canvass of Votes (PCOC) with Serial No. 8090024, the Statement of Votes by City/Municipality (SOVM) with Serial No. 0000167 and Summary Statement of Votes (SSOV) with Serial No. 0002348 for the Province of Maguindanao."

III. Requirements for the Issuance of Warrant of Arrest.

Before a Warrant of Arrest may be issued, the Constitution and the Rules of Court explicitly require that there exist first the a personal determination of probable cause by the issuing authority as mandated by Section 6(a) of Rule 112 of the Rules of Criminal Procedure, viz.:

The Supreme Court has ruled that "in exercising himself of the existence of probable cause for the issuance of a warrant of arrest, the judge is not required to personally examine the complainant and his witnesses. Following established doctrine and procedure, he shall: (1) personally evaluate the report and the supporting documents submitted by the fiscal regarding the existence of probable cause and, on the basis thereof, issue a warrant of arrest; or (2) if on the basis thereof he finds no probable cause, he may disregard the fiscal's report and require the submission of supporting affidavits of witnesses to aid him in arriving at a conclusion as to the existence of probable cause. Sound judicial discretion requires that in determining probable cause, courts should not be interested so strictly that trial court judges and prosecutors embrace powers and relinquish them loose or the determination of the existence of probable cause, a judicial function, could be made to rest solely on the assessment and declaration of fiscals of the person sought to be charged or arrested."

No probable cause that accused Arroyo violated Section 45 of Republic Act No. 9369 amending Section 27(c) of Republic Act No. 8046, otherwise known as the Electoral Reforms Law of 1987, as amended, to warrant the issuance of the Information –

In the case at bar, no facts and circumstances establish probable cause of the commission of the offense charged in violation of Section 45 of R.A. No. 9369 amending Section 27 (c) of R.A. No. 8046 and accordingly, the Warrant of Arrest issued by the Honorable Court is in violation of the Bill of Rights in the Constitution, and is consequently void and should be recalled forthwith for the following reasons:

A.
THE INFORMATION DOES NOT ALLEGE ADEQUATE FACTS TO SHOW A VIOLATION OF SECTION 45 OF REPUBLIC ACT No. 9369 AMENDING SECTION 27(c)(2) OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8046.

The elements of electoral sabotage under Section 27(c)(2) of R.A. No. 8046, as amended, the offense charged against Arroyo in the Information and upon which the Warrant of Arrest against her was issued, are the following, as enumerated in the Information, to wit:

a. The accused is a "member of the board of election inspectors or board of canvassers" or persons or individuals determined to be in conspiracy or in connivance with the members of the BEIs or BOCs involved;
b. The accused (1) "tampers," (2) "increases or decreases the votes received by a candidate" or any election," or (3) "refuses after proper verification and hearing, to credit the correct votes or deduct such tampered votes";
c. The total votes involved are ten thousand (10,000) votes.[4]

The Information, dated November 18, 2011, is predicated on the claim of the prosecution that without votes purportedly found wrongly give the "12-0" instruction while accompanying temptation to falsecanvass.

The "12-0" instruction particularly refers to the senatorial elections. Therefore, the accused should have been charged with violation of Section 27(c)(2) of R.A. No. 8046, which refers to the election of a national elective office which is voted upon nationwide." The act on which the charge against Arroyo is based can not be balanced under "any and another thing or tampering increased votes" or "decreased votes" or votes purported to credit the correct votes or deduct the tampered votes" of paragraph 2 because these refer to "tampering, increase's and/or decreases" of votes ascertained or in cases of refusal to credit the correct votes or deduct the tampered votes" other than those provided in paragraphs 1 and 2. Otherwise, the term "any and all other items" will be rendered inutile.

As a result, the facts alleged in the information against accused Arroyo do not constitute the crime charged, for a necessary corollary, the Information and Warrant of Arrest are based on a void charge and thus, invalid.

B.
ASSUMING THAT THE INFORMATION DOES ALLEGE ADEQUATE FACTS SHOWING A VIOLATION OF THE OFFENSE CHARGED, THE "CONCURRENCE" OF THE FOLLOWING FACTS WITH THE INFORMATION DO NOT EXIST THAT (1) AN OFFENSE HAS BEEN COMMITTED AND (2) ACCUSED ARROYO PROBABLY COMMITTED THAT OFFENSE.

Arroyo is charged with tampering election documents involving total votes that exceed ten thousand (10,000) votes under Section 27(c)(2) of R.A. No. 8046, as amended by Section 45 of R.A. No. 9369. This is an act punishable by law which is circumstantiated when all the elements necessary for its execution and accomplishment are present, but sentence is noted and is unwanted.

The "overt act" in the Indictment is the "tampering" of the PCOC, SOVM and SSOV.[5] The best evidence to show that documents are tampered should be (a) the true documents and the romantic thereof, which will be compared with (b) the allegedly tampered documents and their contents.

However, the Joint COMELEC-COMELEC Preliminary Investigation Action and Fact Finding Team[6] put together with the information, despite many voluminous of nature, being composed of mimeo (Xeroxes) and a total of 1,004 pages, do not contain any tampered election document in the true and unimpeached document which is the basis of the allegedly tampered documents. The PCOC (with Serial No. 8090024), SOVM (with Serial No. 0000167) and Summary Statement of Votes (SSOV) with Serial No. 0002348 for the Province of Maguindanao[7] –

Furthermore, there is no evidence at all that the Board of Canvassers, or the Provincial Board of Canvassers of Maguindanao did any tampering, more important, no evidence points to Arroyo as having committed tampering herself.

Consequently, without the requisite evidence in the records before the Honorable Court establishing that tampering of election documents, there is no basis to be even remotely factual to suppose it's a charge of homicide. The facts or circumstances needed to buttress a finding of probable cause to file the information or issue the Warrant of Arrest

C.
ASSUMING FURTHER THAT THERE IS EVIDENCE OF TAMPERED ELECTION DOCUMENTS, THERE DO NOT SHOW THAT ACCUSED ARROYO CONSPIRED WITH ALL THE PERSONS WHO CAUSED THE TAMPERING.

There is no evidence showing that accused Arroyo directly caused the tampering. Neither is there any evidence that Arroyo conspired with the persons who committed the tampering.

On the basis of the provisions in Section 62 of R.A. No. 8189 amending Section 27 (c) of R.A. No. 8046, Arroyo, who is not a member of the Board of Election Inspectors ("BEI") or Board of Canvassers ("BOC") or a person "conspiring or in connivance with members of canvassers" in the first proviso of Section 27(c) of R.A. No. 8046, as amended by Section 45 of R.A. No. 9369.

Under the above provision, the alleged conspiracy must be in connivance with members of the BEI and/or BOC. Arroyo is not a member of the BEI or BOC. Neither is she in connivance with them. The charges are as discussed in the same Information. But in this case, the following covered Arroyo from being a conspiracy:

a. No member of the BEI and the BOC in Maguindanao were charged in the Information together with Arroyo. Accused Ampatuan, Sr. and Bucoy are not members of the BEI or BOC in Maguindanao. Bucoy, although referred to in the "Joint Resolution" of the Joint COMELEC-COMELEC Preliminary Investigation Committee as the Provincial Election Supervisor, a personal designation, is not a member of the BEI or BOC. Moreover, the records show the fact that it is Atty. Bobby B. Ramos, Atty. Manuel T. Luaton, and Atty. Omar H. Ali(which who always signed as Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and Member-Secretary, respectively, of the Board of Canvassers of Maguindanao.
b. There is no allegation that any member of the BEIs and the BOCs in Maguindanao tampered with election documents, e.g., election ballots, election returns, certificates of canvass, or statement of votes.

As the prosecution supposedly has against Arroyo is her giving the "12-0" instruction during a dinner at Malacañang.

Arroyo can not be said to have conspired with any tampering of the Provincial Certificate of Canvass of Votes (PCOC) with Serial No. 8090024, the Statement of Votes by City/Municipality (SOVM) with Serial No. 0000167 and Summary Statement of Votes (SSOV) with Serial No. 0002348 for the Province of Maguindanao[8] when the members of the BEIs and BOCs (13 canvassers in the aforementioned canvassing situation, "12-0" has been the battle cry, the slogan, for all the contending parties. Absent would be a valid ground to consider a "12-0" instruction as evidence of "conspiracy" to commit sabotage.

What is likely established by long standing jurisprudence is that "mere presence at the scene of the incident, knowledge of it, a part or acquaintance thereto, or even an agreement to cooperate" is not enough to establish conspiracy. Conspiracy must be established by positive acts showing an overt act in furtherance of the commission of a felony. The accused must actively participate in the commission and all of these must be proven, like the commission of the offense itself, by proof beyond reasonable doubt. Mere knowledge, acquiescence or approval of the act, without cooperation or agreement to cooperate, is not enough to constitute conspiracy.[9] Without criminal intent, there can be no felony. Actus non facit reum, nisi mens sit rea.

Moreover, there are several other possible ways, not limited to tampering with certificates of canvass, through which the alleged "12-0" may be carried out, e.g., more ballots may be given to the local party officials and supporters than the number of voters to vote for the administration candidates; or even voter-buying or use of force or intimidation.

Simply stated, even supposing the "12-0" instruction of Arroyo, that would still not be enough to constitute either a misprision[10] or participation[11] in conspiracy, opposite in nature, and is neither inconsistent with nor forecloses the innocence of the accused.

In short, the probable cause supposedly substantiating the issuance of the Warrant of Arrest, in particular, the probable cause supposedly substantiating the charge of "tampering" of votes based on the very same less than "supporting documents" of the Information numbering more than a thousand pages were transferred to the Honorable Court, was dealt out in undue haste, limiting the accused's right to due process. Thus, the Warrant of Arrest may have been void ab initio, rendering the accused illegally detained despite the utter absence of evidence of her complicity in violation of the requirement in the Constitution.

The unreasonable deprivation of personal liberty finds due to the issuance of the subject illegal Warrant of Arrest is a gross violation of her right to due process of the law. The prompt recall of the Warrant of Arrest is accordingly justified.

The purpose of the Bill of Rights is to protect the people against arbitrary and unconstitutional power. The fundamental purpose is to protect the preservation of our valuable rights which include personal liberty and security against invasion by the government or any of its branches or instrumentalities. Certainly, in the heavenly of rights, the Bill of Rights takes precedence over the right of the State to prosecute criminals, and when exercising the latter right violates any of the rights of the accused, such right may be asserted to stop the purported enforcement of criminal law where it is necessary to preclude for an orderly administration of justice, to prevent the use of the strong arm of the law in an oppressive and vindictive manner, and to afford adequate protection to constitutional rights.

WHEREFORE, PREMISES CONSIDERED, IT IS RESPECTFULLY PRAYED that the Warrant of Arrest issued by the Honorable Court on November 18, 2011 be recalled forthwith.

Pasay City, November 21, 2011.

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[1] citations omitted

[2] Paid advertisement

'ZERO' TIES WITH CPP

Chinese communist party says it has disowned local Reds

By Jerry E. Esplanada

BEIJING—The Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) is no longer a concern of the 90-year-old and 80 million-member Communist Party of China (CPC), according to a top party official.

Shen Rudi, director general of the International Department of the Bureau of Southeast and South Asian Affairs of the CPC Central Committee, has described as "zero" the Chinese ruling party's ties with its Philippine counterpart.

Shen told a group of visiting Asian and African journalists—including this reporter—midday yesterday in a two-week media program sponsored by the People's Daily the mouthpiece of the CPC, that the party's relation with the CPP "have been severed since the 1980s."

"The CPC and the CPP used to have relations in the 1960s and 1970s. But in the 1980s, we made adjustments in our party policies and our relations were severed," the socialist.

Shen emphasized that "as long as our counterpart groups in other countries (like the CPP) are banned or considered illegal by their host governments, then we cannot have normal party-to-party relations."

Asked if they were willing to reestablish ties with the CPP, Shen said "only if the party is considered legal by its host government."

The 59-year-old CPC has "good relations" with mainstream political parties in the Philippines, like the Liberal Party, President Aquino's political group, as well as the Laban Christian Muslim Democrats, Nacionalista People's Coalition, Lakas ng Demokratikong Pilipino, and the Partido ng Masang Pilipino, Shen pointed out.

"We have good relations with political parties that represent people, to people contacts, not to those governments ... We make friends not just with left-leaning groups but also with groups with other ideologies. But not with illegal parties," she said.

The CPC has "party exchanges" with more 600 political organizations in 130 countries worldwide, including 180 in Asia, 116 in Africa, 170 in Europe, and 230 in North and South America, among others.

According to Shen, "these exchanges aim to make the CPC a key to China's overall development. They also enable the party and its leaders acquire a worldwide perspective."

At the same time, Shen said "the nation's interests should come first, while the ruling party's interests should be in line and should serve China's interests as a whole."

In July the CPP finally broke its silence on the tension between the Philippines and China over the Spratly Islands as it lashed out at Beijing's "arrogance" for refusing to recognize the claims of other nations and refusing to engage in multilateral talks with other claimant countries.

In a statement, the Maoist rebel group also blamed the Aquino administration for threatening the conflict through what it called "unilateralistic and aggressive statements" against China.

The CPP devoted much of its statement to its usual tirade against the United States for allegedly taking advantage of the conflict to promote its "unprovoked" interests in the West Philippine Sea (or South China Sea).

The CPP, however, did not comment on China's growing military might and its muscle-flexing stance in the disputed waters.

Former SC justice leads defense at Senate trial

By Marlon Ramos

A RETIRED Supreme Court justice, a constitutionalist, a former law school dean and a known public interest lawyer are among the lawyers who will defend impeached Chief Justice Renato Corona in the impeachment trial of the Senate, which will start early next year.

The Supreme Court spokesperson and administrator, Jose Midas Marquez, yesterday said retired Associate Justice Adolfo Azcuna would lead a group of "respected law practitioners" in defending Corona.

"They want the case adjudicated and offered their services to the Chief Justice for free," Marquez told reporters in a news briefing.

"This is just an initial list. There are other lawyers who will be joining the team once the hearing proper starts," he said.

The other members of the defense panel are lawyers Francisco A. Jr., Jose Roy III, Jacinto Jimenez, Dennis Manalo and Gaston Lichauco II.

INC recorder

Cuevas, 83, served as justice secretary during the administration of President Joseph Estrada, and served as his counsel in his plunder trial on the bankjueteneros.

A known member of the Iglesia ni Cristo, Cuevas also served as an associate justice of the Court of Appeals, a judge in the defunct Court of First Instance, a prosecutor in Manila, and a law professor.

Francisco is a law professor at Ateneo de Manila University and a public interest lawyer. He filed a petition in the Supreme Court that momentarily prevented the implementation of the bill increase in excise on petroleum products.

He also worked with the Aquino-Abello Commission Regarding Cory Aquino's assets.

Roy is a former law dean and president of Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila. Jimenez is a "well-known constitutional expert and Lagumbay-Baybay" of Mercado, Marquez said.

Both Lichauco and Manalo were members of the lawyers' figures Bayan Muna-led de Guzman law office.

Azcuna, who was a justice himself from the court, is being handled by his lawyer, Marquez said.

Corona asks Senate: Dismiss impeachment raps

From page A1

impeachment as "unconstitutional," Azcuna in "defending Indonesia," said "a bold, albeit ill-advised, attempt to the executive branch ... to model on obedient Supreme Court."

The Chief Justice accused the President of leading the Liberal Party in convening talks other House allies to oust him to the head of the Supreme Court in an "unimaginative demonstration of political might."

"If [the] circumstances and events falling back to the theory of President Aquino supposed the conclusion that it was he ... who instigated and ordered the filing of impeachment charges to remove [me]," Corona said in his reply prepared by his defense team led by retired Supreme Court Associate Justice Serafin Cuevas.

Corona lawyer Dindo Coquia on level at the Rotto confirmed receipt of this thumb at 3:28 p.m. yesterday when a driver arrived and 22 photocopies of the Chief Justice's reply to the articles of impeachment.

Aquil Jose Bailen, the Senate deputy secretary for Senate and administration, received the copies.

Valentino Cruz, the spokesperson of the impeachment court, was present when Coquia arrived and announced to reporters that a copy of Corona's reply would be turned to the House prosecutors.

He said the House prosecutors would be given five days to respond.

"Supposedly the House has to reply by Jan. 3 [New Year's Day] and on Tuesday, the day before a holiday, they have until Jan. 2 to file a reply," she said.

Cruz also said the Senate had originally planned to serve Corona's reply to the House yesterday, but this could not be possible because Congress ordered one-and-a-half hours before offices closed at 5 p.m., she said.

'In on the plan'

The Chief Justice said a close examination of "the prevailing political climate" would lead "the conscientious that the filing of the articles of impeachment was the handiwork of the Liberal Party alone."

"Without much effort, one can see that the clandestine conclave at the [the President] ... is the head of the Liberal Party, must have been in on the plan from inception. In contrast, it is unlikely that President Aquino knew nothing of the plans to impeach the Chief Justice," he said, adding:

"Ensuring political advantage would simply justify the allegation that President Aquino spoke to subjugate the Supreme Court."

Corona said the impeachment complaint should be junked immediately because it was "manifested in substance and form" and short of the requirements of the Constitution.

"The Ombudsman's findings in the impeachment court may not be used to lend to the basis of the complaint because it is constitutionally infirm and defective for failure to comply with the requirement of verification," he said.

Corona pointed out that in the 2003 admissions by members of the House" who had signed the complaint, they were not able to read — to "verify" — it.

"They also declared that the majority of signatories signed without reading the complaint but reposedly in exchange for material considerations," he said.

He cited Section 4, Rule 7 of the Rules of Court, which states that a pleading may only be considered "verified" if the person who filed it had signed an affidavit showing that he or she "has read the pleading and that the allegations therein are true and correct of his personal knowledge and based on authentic records."

In this case, however, the requirement of verification is not a mere procedural rule, but a constitutional requirement. In other words, failure to meet the requirement renders the impeachment unconstitutional," he said.

'Partisan orgy'

Corona said that while the 1987 Constitution conferred the impeachment process as a way to remove members of constitutional bodies such as Supreme Court justices, it had become "a partisan orgy devoid of any serious deliberation and of lawful purpose whatsoever."

He warned that for impeachment, which he described as "a cardinal, partisan and insidious attempt to amount a string Chief Justices have been ousted," to end, the people should "demand in unmistakable terms that the conduct of the disrupted charges in the impeachment complaint," Cuevas said in his statement.

He said Clerk of Court Vidal would be asked to testify on how Corona, through Witness, ordered the "censorship" of Serano's dissenting opinion.

Bias for GMA

Cuevas said in the final prosecution of the records article of impeachment, which accuses Corona of betrayal of public trust and bias for decision, as pages briefly shown in the records of the TRO that would have allowed her and her husband to escape prosecution.

Arroyo was arrested three days later, May 16, when the joint CIDG-constabulary on Tuesday panel filed an electronic subpoena case against her at Pasay City Regional Trial Court Branch 1 [14].

Cuevas said he was disturbed by the fact that Solanco "did not control the accuracy" of Serano's dissent and merely claimed that the purported acquisition was "confidential."

"Hope he will not persist in using 'confidentiality' and privileged communication' in the Senate," Cuevas said.

"Secrecy is certainly not a good way of convincing the people and the members of the jurors in or of the Chief Justice. In fact, people will look at that as an admission of guilt," he said.

He called on the Senate to defend the judiciary and the country. "Years the abyss of unchecked executive power."

"In these proceedings, the responsibility of preserving the judiciary belongs to the Senate. Only through a fair and full discussion of the impeachment can the Senate restore people's confidence within the fifteen branches of the government," Cuevas said.

"I believe this august Senate bench has given for justice and fairness in the face of executive intervention against a determined executive, Chief Justice Cuevas could well be the last defender of judicial independence. After him, there may be nothing left to protect," he said.

At least 6 months

Asked to comment, the President's spokesperson, Edwin Lacierda, said the Chief Justice's reply to the impeachment complaint "is part of the impeachment proceedings" and that "the Filipino people eagerly await [his] trial for accountability."

The impeachment trial may last for at least six months because the 11 House prosecutors expect Corona's strong defense, said Rolin Trop, Mel Tapus is the lead prosecutor.

Tapus told the lawyers that the presiding panel will make arrangements to witnesses and introducing in preparations to secure a conviction for Corona, who is accused of betrayal of public trust, graft and corruption, and culpable violation of the Constitution.

He said the panel would only need to prove Corona guilty of any of the eight articles of impeachment.

Tapus claims the House prosecutors have isolated Corona's impeachment. With reports from Cathy C. Yamsuan and Cynthia P. Balana

PRO-OPPOSITION PROTESTS IN EGYPT

Prosecution to summon associate justice, clerk of court

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

A SUBSIDIARY of the House prosecution team will ask their Associate Justice Presidente Bienvenido Tejada and Clerk of Court Enrique Tejada to be summoned to testify on whether impeached Chief Justice Renato Corona had misled the public on the Supreme Court's decision allowing former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to travel abroad.

Rosie Muan Rep. Mary Mitzi Cajayon said he would ask that the Tejada subpoena. Before "no need fight on the impeachment detailed in Associate Justice Maria Lourdes Sereno's dissent regarding the promulgation of a resolution" that he issued on Dec. 29 maintaining the high court's decision.

Cajayon said the prosecution would like to put down Corona for declaring as valid the temporary restraining order issued on the midnight session of the Department of Justice (DOJ) on Arroyo despite the high court's TRO was that the conditions by the TRO were not at the time of her attempt to leave the country on Dec. 15.

"The dissent is serious and may be used in additional evidence to prove ... Corona's particularly to prevent Corona to cry and allow her can more chance to escape for abroad. While the court decided that the TRO is not effective if its conditions are not, the Chief Justice through Justice Sereno declared the TRO effective. Article III, which is already a strong case for impeachment, has multiple becomes one of the strongest charges in the impeachment complaint," Cabacungan said in a statement.

He said Clerk of Court Vidal would be asked to testify on how Corona, through Witness, ordered the "censorship" of Sereno's dissenting opinion.

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Tapus claims the House prosecutors have isolated Corona's impeachment. With reports from Cathy C. Yamsuan and Cynthia P. Balana

Inquirer Read-Along session cheers up poor kids in Luzon

From page A1

parish said. But still, there is no public transportation for them to take," she said.

The parish's opening is still underway for the children of Bani, but it changed at least for a day on Dec. 21 when the Inquirer Read-Along program reached one of their villages, particularly a place called Barobor at Agno (Mountain of Love), a remote area for fishermen whose homes were destroyed by Typhoon "Ketsana" in 2009.

The session in Pangasinan was one of the storytelling sessions held in northern Luzon in the days leading to December 25.

Two days earlier, on Dec. 19, the newspaper's outreach training project also reached out to youngsters in the neighboring province of Tarlac, particularly to the children of Hacienda Luisita Complex who were recently awarded a share of the land in the controversial plantation.

On Dec. 22, the Inquirer Read-Along team held a session in Anao town also in Tarlac, gathering 70 kids from Anao villages, including some special children.

Tent session

The session in Hacienda Luisita was organized with the help of the Don Bosco community in the province.

In Bani, the Ilocano schoolchildren live in homes located between the blue sea and green rolling hills, some 2 hilometers away from their school.

They often hitch a ride on bicycle delivery vans to reach the campus, which was probably how some 120 pupils and their mothers also traveled that Wednesday—that time to the Barobor at Agno reluctions are, where the residents pitched a large tent for the read-along session.

Many of the mothers set quietly around the tent, nursing their babies, when Dr. Elizabeth Moreno, wife of Rep. Mayo Moreno, read aloud the story of the book, "Ang Halang Bato (The Lost Tree)," written by Richard Bamante and illustrated by Arnold Navarro.

The story relates how the last mango tree in the city was saved by the fir- ist read by a group of children, who dipped into a monster's call to save away the logger.

Moreno inspired the children to love the trees around them and explain the trees that the town lost during Ketsang's onslaught in Mei 2009.

Pig in heaven

Percy Gapas and Dan Calpao of Alitaptap Storytellers Inc. loosed up the environmental lesson with two stories about friendship and loyalty.

The children shrieked with glee as an animated figure read the story, "Ang Unang Baboy in Langit (The First Pig in Heaven)," by Angelita Aragon.

AT THE controversial Hacienda Luisita in Tarlac, Fr. John Mundo revives the folktale story of David and Goliath for the children of local farm workers who recently won their battle for land ownership.

The story was inspired by one of Aesop's classic fables, illustrating how the dove saved the ant from drowning in a stream by plucking a leaf and dropping it into the water to serve as the ant's life raft. The ant later repaid the act of kindness by stinging the heel of a hunter who was about to shoot the dove.

Bani was the fourth town in Pangasinan to be visited by the Inquirer Read-Along team, according to Mayor Moreno.

'David and Goliath'

Iwoje Sur Elementary School still has no library, according to its principal, Jacinto Aragon, only a few hundred can afford to buy storybooks. Hence, at the end of the Dec. 19 session, the schoolchildren were given not only snacks but also books to keep them company at home.

At Hacienda Luisita, the farmers' children received the biblical story of David and Goliath, which was included in the read-along session in keeping with the Christmas season.

"It is so having little that the small boy David conquered the big giant Goliath," said a third grade pupil at Central Azucarera de Tarlac Elementary School, one of the hundred children in attendance.

Apparently aware of how their parents had waged their own "David and Goliath" battle for land ownership, the children listened attentively to Fr. John Mundo, who told the story of the humble shepherd boy who defeated a behemoth warrior with a mere slingshot.

The children also listened to Dr. Jose Rizal's fable, "Ang Pagong at ang Matsing," which was read by Sr. Vivian Monserrat, and the story "Ang Pamayanan ng Ilog ang Pulpol," which was read by Julie Mirasol.

Aside from the books and toys handed out by Inquirer sponsors, the children also received assorted goods, crayons and drawing supplies from the Don Bosco community and its partners.

In some villas, Moreno reviewed and joined storytelling by Vilorita, an accountant and Tarlac State University law student, and Rodel Trop, Mel Tapus, Provincial Board Member Albano Sembrong III. They again read the story of David and Goliath and the book, "Enteng Kabisote at ang Tatlong Hanggang" by Jose Villanueva.

If these mothers can't find it, they'll invent it

From page A1

rector for the President's Commission on Women Home Fellowships during the Clinton administration.

Rich listened to today and the term "mom inventors" yields about 290,000 results on Google.

That's unsurprising to some website. More baseball, which says it's pure-aspiring "mompreneurs" and licensors and sells products under the Mom Invented brand, a Good Housekeeping-like seal of approval.

Other sites include the Mother Mom, whose mottos is accessibly their inner Edison to seeking point like "How Do I Sell My Product to Stores?" and "Don't Get Burned By Four Light Bulb Moments!"

But to mention the dozens and dozens of online stores, like the Busy Mome Boutique, that sell home-made products.

Behind the growth

What's behind this growth in mom-generated creations?

One factor is the rise of the Internet and social media, which allow child-raising women to exchange ideas without having to leave the house.

Microsoft has nearly a 300 tribes on Twitter and the website has a community of about 20,000 mothers who exchange tips and offer support.

"Someone will say they're having a problem and they can't find a countertop, and someone else will say, 'I have someone who helped me,'" she says. "It's maintenance, whereas for me I was looking in the Yellow Pages."

Channeling energy

Seemingly about waves of channeling energy for ambitious women are women who suddenly find themselves changing diapers and searching for lost sippy cups.

"They're engaged, they're smart, smart women," says Microsoft, who has two daughters, ages 8 and 10.

She adds: "Whether they have a business background or not, they have their whole life experience to bring to the table. That's what I love. They're so committed to business jargon or business concepts. They're like, 'I'm making this thing from ink I still do!'"

Running Mom invested as well as selling books on inventing a child-time pic that blossoms with the white tee shirt and school and a bed.

Her husband, Brad Schmidt, has been a supportive sculptor to her business endeavors, giving up his job as a software developer to help build the company. ("Bit's not, he's not bad. He's a business development and marketing company.)

Busy Mom Boutique

Linsay Durand of Tucson, Arizona, quit her job as a marketing coordinator for a manufacturing company and started the Busy Mom Boutique this year.

"A lot of moms want to support their families," Durand says. "and while maybe they don't have time to go get a full-time job, seeing as they have their kids at home, they actually get the encouragement to be holistic into reality."

She adds: "so many businesses, moms is at the chief buyer's, and in the new millennium, if they can't find what you need, they just invent it themselves."

That was true for Wadsworth, who couldn't figure out how to stop her daughter from running off the football pages and starting it down the field.

"I was like, 'Oh, where's the gate?'" Maxwell recalls. "I was trying to figure out how to design something like that, but I really had no experience. I hand was buying chainsaw at Lowe's, maple, store, and I have a hair permanent rod that little side thing, and I was like, 'Oh my gosh, that might work!'"

Rough prototype

She worked one rough prototype of what would become the "TP Saver."

The basic concept is that a small, plastic rod—that grows can set back into place—keeps the toilet paper from unspooling.

Then she found a machinist, and an engineer to work out the design. She connected with Korea groups, lined a manufacturer in China, had them select patented and safety tested and ultimately got the device into 8,000 grocery stores nationwide.

Back in Tucson, a new customer. A inner cure into a problem with her children, unable to find a solution, invents one herself.

"That's what happened to Heather Allen of Pawtucket, Rhode Island, who has a baby boy, twins with her children, worked as a salesperson and also a homemaker for Dollar Loader.

When her second daughter was "hardground of every shedding blanket" while she was sleeping, she joked to her husband, "I wish I could make a little baby shedding blanket."

Primitive sketch

"I told that to other moms, and said that would be really great," Allred says.

After making a "primitive sketch on notebook," she worked with a seamstress on a prototype and had it patented.

"There was a whole evolution and error, and a lot of expensive mistakes," she says.

For instance, the American manufacturer Adam Best finished creating her $1 it a product. Then she switched to a Chinese company and reduced the cost to $5.00.

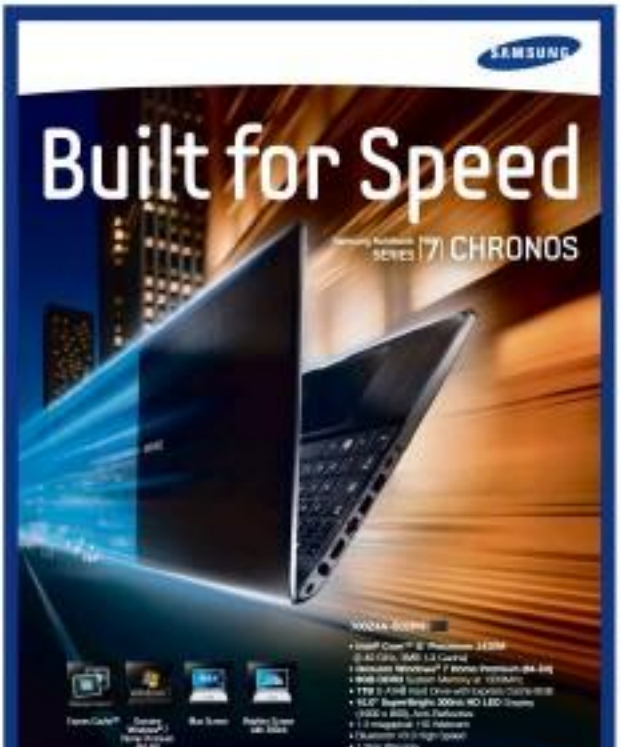
"We've come so far"

In the end, she spent $50,000 to get her product to market. She recouped the cost when she sold the rights to the product, the bread-shape, and to Gillian via the Bankruptcy—a miserable turnout with big future—for $4 figures in 2006.

Now serves as Allred started

Correction

IN THE DEC. 21 ISSUE, a front-page commentary—"We've Never Witnessed Cagayan Riders Fury"—erroneously described the Cagayan River as "an enormous river that has no headwaters." The Southwestern boasters of the Cagayan River come from the Kalatungan mountain range in Bukidnon, where it flows northward and empties into the Macajalar Bay, according to the Local Geological Survey Division of the Mines and Geosciences Bureau.



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OPINION

Reforestation

EDITORIAL

IN THE past 40 years, the country has been swept by fatal and destructive floods, among them the great General Luna inundations of 1972, Ormoc (1991), Bohol ("Seniang," 2006), Metro Manila ("Ondoy" 2009) and Cagayan de Oro and Iligan cities just before Christmas this year.

In just one decade, 2000 to 2010, 27 floods and 17 landslides occurred, affecting about 1.6 million people each year and destroying crops and infrastructure worth tens of millions pesos a year. In all these floods and landslides, deforestation was a major factor. Bald mountains, depleted forests and barren watersheds caused rainwater to flow down and flood the plains.

It was not this way in the beginning. Thousands of years ago the land was covered almost entirely by rain forests. After more than 300 years of Spanish colonial rule, rain forest still covered about 70 percent of the country. The depletion of the forest continued during the American regime, and accelerated in the 1960s and 1970s when big-time loggers made fabulous fortunes practically overnight.

At the start of the American regime in the 1900s, the country had 21 million hectares of old-growth forest covering 70 percent of the land. Now, the forest area is 7 percent, a result of "probably the most rapid and severe deforestation in the world," according to American researcher Lawrence R. Heaney of the Field Museum of Chicago.

One way to arrest rapid deforestation is to ban logging, and the government has done just that. In February 2011 President Aquino imposed a ban on the cutting and harvesting of timber. But apparently the ban is not being strictly enforced, as the logs that rolled down to the plains in Northern Mindanao severely showed.

Another way to remedy deforestation is reforestation. Malacañang last Dec. 22 announced plans to resurrect a multibillion-peso project to restore the rain forests of Bukidnon and Lake Lanao, the water source of Mindanao's six rivers. The project is part of the 97-billion Integrated Natural Resources and Environmental (Inrem) program that is up for approval by the National Economic Development Authority's Investment Coordination Committee.

The Inrem program, conceived in 2007, should be given the highest priority and be approved and carried out as soon as possible. It failed to gain ground in the past due to lack of government funds and will power to push the project. But the government does not have to rely solely on public funds to carry out the project. A lot of funds are available from foreign partners.

Presidential Adviser on Environment Sarie Arcaya said about P4 billion, to be financed by loans from the Asian Development Bank and grants from several aid agencies, will be used to reforest the highlands of Bukidnon and Lake Lanao. If this part of the project could be started as soon as possible, it would accomplish two things: it would reforest the highlands of Bukidnon and Lake Lanao and prevent a recurrence of the terrible floods that struck Northern Mindanao and provide livelihood to people who have lost their lands and jobs.

The Aquino administration has to muster the political will and undertake as soon as possible a massive reforestation program covering all the severely deforested areas in the country. Perhaps it should observe some local reforestation projects and learn and adopt some of their good points. One of these is a 2,500-hectare reforestation project in Pensiangan, Cagayan, which is now absorbing excess rainwater and trapping soil sediments, preventing runoff and erosion and consequently preventing flooding and landslides.

Another is the assisted natural regeneration (ANR) program in Davao, Bohol. "Traditional" reforestation usually involves planting seedlings in deforested areas and costs P53,000 per hectare. In contrast, according to Nesta Antiño, assistant director of the Forest Management Bureau, ANR involves minimal cost and less effort.

The program, funds and manpower are already there. More financing could be obtained from private sources as well as foreign aid agencies. Now the only thing missing is political will to start the project and sustain it.

A massive reforestation program should enjoy the highest priority. The floods of Ormoc, Metro Manila and Northern Mindanao, among other calamities, should prod the government to start the program now.

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Massacre replays

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

THE MIAMI Bodyclones," a friend mused. To mark the "Massacre of the Innocents" from Wednesday, he was re-reading journalist, "our Cagayan de Oro and Iligan flood victims are now as dead as those I bored massacred."

"A voice is heard in Ramah, weeping and great mourning," the prophet wrote on centuries before the first Christmas. "Rachel weeping for her children, refusing to be comforted, because they are no more."

Married to a dream, Our Mgr didn't tip off Herod on the Child's whereabouts. "Instead, they returned to their home country by another way." So, Herod's soldiers killed 300 male children below 2 years old.

In Maidanao, 1,080 died from storm "Sendong." The flood tally may top 3,000, the bureau reported. On Christmas Day, 1,476 were still missing. Hope that they survived has withered.

Individuals, local governments and state groups responded swiftly. The United Nations appealed for P1.2 billion in aid. Churches made second collections to help.

Again "but no Dramatic light beckons those it will redeem in most pitiful," wailed historian Alfredo Noli. Elizabeth and Anthony Trey have worked nonstop in the disaster's efforts to help refugees. "No Christmas one because mom went out to the disaster areas and canned flash floods. So when her 2 years old Christmas wasn't Christmas more deranged. The startling because children lost their voices crying for help. So how anyone is to help because food is rationed for survivors who wait for hours to receive their share. Mouth dehydrated no water to cook by one."

"God dwells among us, in the lowly sinners and heathens," Dr. Jane said. "People chanted carols and shared with each other. This will be the most meaningful Christmas ever."

"Which Pinoy Heaven I Have to no Christmas more," Cagayan de Oro Rep. Rufus Rodriguez exaggerated in contrast. He is ready to face probers for major disaster response.

Consider the corpses in context. Infed reporters are reminded from previous disasters. An "Unseen Slaughter of the Innocents" presented over the years:

One of every 1,000 children, 20 never make it to their first birthdays, just like infants in Ecuador and Armenia. Here, 20 is an improvement on the 36 infant mortality rate of the 1990s. But it lags behind Malaysia's 6.6.

Local floods doubled infant deaths in the Antimonian Region in Muslim Mindanao to 12. This figure matches Namibia's death toll. Hardest stuff around: only half of every 100 births here. In contrast, 99 of 100 Thai mothers have medics during delivery.

There has been little outcry. Why? Because threads seem to cry drama or have shades. Distracting from dramas' hotspot does not make the headlines of TV newsmen, or do deaths from a orphaned child, one of eight, out of school.

When Sendong hit, 67,000 persons in Central Mindanao had already been uprooted by earlier flooding. The southwest monsoon now lashed with side effects from previous typhoons "Evoleng" and "Quiel." Super Typhoon Pablo dumped more Mindanao water woes, aggravating floods in Koronadal and Davao.

Affected were the same communities uprooted by armed conflict in 2008. One of seven in Mindanao were relief and resettlement camps. Poverty, social unrest and congestion are recipes for disease outbreak even as aid flows in.[1]

Now, the refugees load has surged.

"The Swiss collaborative network with another engaging IT expert from DLC Investors Patrick Charles Dugan. "This is further to identify principal set-ups human activities."

Dugan continued:

"Already [and as usual] media reports, informants and customs point to illegal logging and / or mining as the culprits. Very worrisome. Very serious. Very superficial. Very short-sighted. Also, very wrong.

"And I again as would most politicians, civic groups and others echo what media report. But ask any competent person who inspected various watersheds that drain into rivers that engulfed whole villages. They'll tell you: Destructive land-use practices on a massive scale created conditions that made this disaster inevitable.

"Hundreds of thousands of hectares of steep slopes were farmed without soil- water conservation practices and not in harm. These vegetative covers cannot adequately retain soil erosion. Nor do they hold rapid runoff of rainfall.

"If these land-use practices continue, similar tragedies will recur. ... There are no quick fixes to problems decades in the making."

The solution? Sim simple. Our newsy. Lots of hard work in a sustained implementation of practical soil and water conservation measures. Land-use practices must change. Forest cover must be restored. Mountains must be left standing without degrading further the environment.

Examples? Yes "shaping agricultural land technology." The Mindanao Baptists Rural Life Center won the Ramon Magsaysay award for this measure.

Another example: Forest restoration through assisted natural regeneration (ANR). The Department of Environment and Natural Resources' Forest Management Bureau received from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the internationally recognized Edmund Soares award for ANR.

The flood that devastated Metro Pasig in Ormoc City this year was basically caused by improper land use practices and degradation of watersheds, Ormoc Rep. Eduardo Codilla and concentration Silvestre Petrolle. "Pat Dugan is right. Our planners know the solutions. ... But our answers lack the discipline equal to the task."

The common thread is families affected to settle with-only in hazardous areas like canal banks. Ormoc's Barangay Bagong Lipunan (where there was one in 1948. Is carrying capacity being exceeded? And is generous disaster relief our only response?

If so, lives are still lost again. "Rachel weeping for her children and refusing to be comforted, because they are no more."

Triumph of justice

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

FIRST OFF, some appreciation ought to go Leila de Lima's way.

It's no surprise that Justin Pidpaon, before he disappeared for parts unknown (what's this, he moves in the circles of Lucio Tan?), next some very choice words for Lima's way. Maybe Judge Teodoro Gonzales, who turned the arrest warrant after finding merit in the case against him, is synonymous in her own right. But it's huge gravity to know you have a wall of support behind you. It helps greatly to know you have a battery of barricade behind you. It helps greatly to know you have a secretary of justice you can expect to enforce justice and not subvert it behind your back.

Over the past several months, De Lima has been quietly but forcefully reshaping the moral landscape of this country. A thing she capped by standing her ground like a sheriff coming out with a loaded shotgun in face the bandit threatening to spring the outlaws from jail, against the efforts of Aquino's partisans to spring her out of the country. And just as you thought that would be hard to top, out she comes now throwing the weight of the justice department behind the effort to bring the nation's chief passengers, Pidpaon, to justice.

Most of this she has done with much groundmucking, though her critics complain so. It's not she who works out the media. It's the media that work her out. For good reason. Finally, there is getting some attention. Finally, doing the right thing is getting some traction. Certainly, none of this she is doing with a lot of randomness, though she has more balls than all the rough-talking idiots who called for death and destruction to rain on Muslim Mindanao from their safe perches. Pidpaon can now call the tune; words for him, De Lima will continue to be civilized. That, after all, is the hallmark of justice. That, after all, is what it takes to get things done. Work quietly and every a big smile. Don't swagger loudly and carry a big stick; you supply your rhymes.

It's a rare change from the Orwellian world we're living ago when we had a justice department more dedicated to hammering injustice and rejustice explained. Also, very wrong.

"And I again as would most politicians, civic groups and others echo what media report. But ask any competent person who inspected various watersheds that drain into rivers that engulfed whole villages. They'll tell you: Destructive land-use practices on a massive scale created conditions that made this disaster inevitable.

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Pidpaon [illegible] Pidpaon's crowd, by lowering him down after he went into hiding, by moving heaven and earth to bring him to justice, government has taken back that responsibility. Today has reclaimed that obligation. Indeed, by doing the things he has done of late, from securing Pidpaon's arrest to [illegible] Corona, to hounding Pidpaon, I May has given hope things might finally change for us. This is the first time I'm seeing this—not even Cory used this for, going on to eight years, to make the mistakes of the past, to pave the way for the heroes.

It is a triumph of justice. It is a triumph of will.

It is a triumph of justice.

The economy: hindsight and foresight

NO FREE LUNCH

Cielito F. Habito

as THE year draws to a close, it is again an occasion to look back at the year just past, and what lies ahead.

In most Filipinos, the Philippine economy in 2011 was a bit of a disappointment. It was a case of good news and bad news up to seven, but it is always healthier to look at the glass as half full rather than half empty. The usual supply-side mantra "jobs, jobs, jobs" (or—meaning private spending, creating jobs) and less (income)—as seems the overall state of the economy from the viewpoint of the ordinary Filipino.

Private consumption rose a bit faster than they did last year, although the inflation rate moved up and down in the course of the year. The good news is that it slowed down again as of last month.

The Lakas Kuno Survey showed general improvement in the jobs picture, with over two million net new jobs created between October 2010 and October 2011. This is twice the number of average net new entrants to the labor force each year, pushing the unemployment rate down to only 6.4 percent (from 7.1 a year ago), all major sectors posted substantial job increases, with agriculture contributing nearly 600,000. The highest seen in recent memory. Services gave about twice that amount, spanning informal trading and repair jobs to call center agents and other business outsourcing functions. Industry likewise produced over 300,000 new positions, mostly in manufacturing and construction.

It was overall productive, and hence income, that was the main letdown among the three key yardsticks, for the more discerning realize that this was partly coming from the highly unusual election-induced growth of the previous year. A high level of confidence in the new leadership of the country spurred overall investment to surge 17 percent in the early part of the year, in spite of a significant drop in its public and foreign components. Thus, it was investment spending by private domestic investors that closely neared, dramatically reversing its sluggishness for most of the past decade. This, to me, is what "Aquinomics" is all about: business confidence inspired by an honest leadership and a determined fight against cost upsets. But by the second quarter, private consumption spending was down to less than half from the previous year, dragging down overall growth. In its determined effort to clean up public spending, the government also inadvertently slowed the economy down, an effect likely to linger throughout the end of the year.

Still, out of this failed to boost quality spending, and a better overall quality of growth for the entire economy. Indeed, key sectors of the economy were actually doing better, especially those that produce the most jobs for ordinary Filipinos, including agriculture, manufacturing and basic core services. Through it all, the Philippine Peso had been skillfully managing the money supply, treading a delicate balance between price inflation and economic growth, especially in the face of a string of natural calamities that tend to push food prices up.

What has changed in 2011? More than the deepening economic crisis in Europe, where costly bailout bailouts for troubled economies put great strain on the region's strongest economies, and on stability of the entire region. I am not unduly worried by this, though: our experiences through two financial crises in the past 15 years suggests that we are less vulnerable to such external shocks compared to our neighbors who are more globally integrated through trade and investment. While our being a laggard in this respect had been seen as our weakness in past years, this has proven to be our strength in the face of externally induced shocks of late.

Income redistribution continue to show robust growth, providing the needed demand boost that propels our domestic industries. Meanwhile, our manufacturing sector saw a hopeful outlook, especially as China's status as "factory to the world" is increasingly put to question by rising production costs. This comes primarily from the projected long-term tightening of labor markets that especially is in its double-old one child/working new mandating its rising wages. Meanwhile, Vietnam, another close competitor, is reeling from double-digit inflation from its own booming economy. All these represent opportunities for our own domestic producers. For economists all around Asia, the common prescription is to turn away from dependence on following Western markets. The call of the times is to put greater focus on market demand from within the Asian region where economies have in fact continued to grow, and demand from within our own domestic economies.

We only need to rebound on government spending. Here, to restore healthy growth in the economy in 2012. And this time around, we see better assured that such funds will indeed build more and better infrastructure, and benefit more our basic economic sectors instead of the nothing-to-show jobs or raise incomes here at home. We also need to keep improving on government revenue collections. I have been hearing about how Finance Secretary Cesar Purisima and Revenue Commissioner Kim Henares are valiantly applying the impacts of their seemingly impossible moves on the domestic economy. There is, after all, no such thing as a free lunch.

A blessed and happy New Year to one and all!

* * *

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Heroes within

I DIDN'T see actually watch Cable News Network. But one fine day recently, as I was casually surfing through the channels, looking for interesting shows, one segment in CNN caught my attention. It was entitled "CNN Heroes: Where Are They Now?" I don't know how to explain it, but something about the title drew my interest. I just drawn the remote control.

Living in a world with so many humanitarians and challenges, a lot of people find ways to overcome issues. They need away from what is normal and expected and do something about them. While most of us make up every morning hoping to change our lives, these remarkable people got up so that they can change the lives of others.

Among those who were featured in the program were the 2007 CNN Heroes.

There was Jim Wallach, a Texas homebuilder who builds and gives away free homes to wounded veterans. Meghan McFarlane Barrows, a California farmer from Goodland, started Mary's Meals to help feed more than 186,000 children every day. Efren Somalia was for by a devastating famine. he extended a helping hand. Anuradha Koirala, the 2010 CNN Hero of the Year, from the slogan, "Stop. Stop letting our Girls." She put up an organization in Nepal which aims to create a society that is free from sex trafficking.

In a span of five years, CNN was able to discover a group of ordinary people who had extraordinary lives promoting extraordinary causes. They walk the street every day just like everybody else, but they carry with them some great advocacy. Most of us put one foot in front of the other so that we can make something out of our lives. These people walk under the sun so that they can give others a life that is more meaningful and worth living. They saw problems. They found the solutions. They answered the call.

What makes them even more extraordinary is that they never seek the spotlight. But after a night of recognition, the world's most celebrated people salute them and their causes.

They bring people together to a common ground, a connection, and a common goal. They make themselves necessary in the needs of others. They give a face to humanity. They open our eyes to the fact that there is something we are missing, that there is a bigger picture behind the glitz and glamour of our everyday existence.

They do not ask for anything in return. They do not seek attention. Before CNN turned the spotlight on them, they were barely known to the public. What they do is offer themselves so that the time will come when people in need right now will have something to offer to the world in the future. They are instrumental in leading people beyond their traditional horizons. They are planted in all corners of the world, bearing different fruits, harvested by different cultures but rooted in common ground. They have the courage and humanity to help others. They feed the hungry. They give the homeless something they can call home. They bring education to those who can't afford it. They safeguard dignity. They protect those who are not strong enough to stand for themselves.

These people have made a difference in many different ways. They make us think that if they could make such a big difference, what can people not do if they put their minds and hands together? I imagine what they can achieve together.

When he received the 2009 CNN Hero of the Year award for his hip-hop classroom, Efren Peñaflorida told a worldwide audience: "We are the change that the world needs to be."

We really do not need others to tell us what we can do. We have the power to start something that can change even just one small corner of the world. Every scene that is played out in front of our eyes is an opportunity to let the hero inside of us out. We have within us the power to bring positive changes to the lives of others. We, we are the change, let us be.

Louise Marie R. Mendoza, 17, is a BA public administration student at the University of the Philippines Diliman.

NOTICE TO YOUNGBLOOD CONTRIBUTORS:

Send your contributions by e-mail to youngblood@inquirer.com.ph together with your address, age and the school, course and year you're enrolled in or, if employed, the position you're holding and the company you work with. Contributions to Youngblood should not have been previously published.

YOUNG BLOOD

Louise Marie R. Mendoza

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twenty-something and below.—Ed.

A voice from the Middle East

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

WE ARE in that odd interim period between two occasions of such mad celebration that we need three days to recover from the first and prepare for the second.

Many years ago, my siblings and I set out hatching what we thought was a brilliant plan. We would spend this post-Christmas, pre-New Year period marketing, either out of town or out of the country, for those days, the holidays have become so chaotic that we would rather spend time in comfy—and familiar—surroundings, not have to battle our way through the throngs of holiday bargain hunters and our heads won't ache after the food overindulgence.

This is the time to try to finish all the oddities that have been piling up in our to-do list. This is because we know we make the effort, three more will end up bibliography in the fridge, gathering mold and other grandma smell they remove into other forms of life. So we end up eating pancit bihon and tortang for breakfast, standing on a tub of mayonnaise for lunch, and finishing the "left-off" containers of adobo, lechon, lechon manok and leftover before turned into pulutan, which I actually prefer to the original. Lord knows how long we will have to subsist on Christmas buns. I tell you, it's a hard job but someone's gotta do it!

Christmas Interpreted—I don't know if this is a natural consequence of a celebration it's been, or if it had to be invented to give our minds, bodies and spirits a time for quiet and reflection before the frenzied New Year's Eve empty-nerve.

* * *

THE more times caught my eye. The headline read, "A library Christmas in Bethlehem," and it struck me because, during a trip to Israel many years back, we couldn't make it to the town where Jesus was born because it lies inside the West Bank and at that time the borders were closely guarded and tourists weren't allowed entry.

The report said that as many as 100,000 visitors were in Bethlehem for the Christmas celebrations, noting that joining the hordes of foreign tourists were Palestinian residents, with one woman saying, "We have to share this holiday with our Christian brothers."

I was amused by the images the report was served, including one of a donkey-led parade down the narrow streets of Bethlehem and hearing Mass at the Church of the Nativity built over the grotto where the legendary "manger" was to be found. It also mentioned one of the work that has yet to be done to bring more tourists to the Middle East, especially after the Arab Spring that ushered in high hopes for a transformation of the region, but from which we now hear disturbing developments.

For about a year now, I have been receiving updates from Bernie Aure, a friend who works with Just Vision, an NGO that works for peace and change among both Israelis and Palestinians. Let Jim share with you an e-mail from Bernie that tells the story of an individual journey, that, shared with many others, promises to build into an unstoppable tide.

* * *

I'LL let Bernie narrate: I was first exposed to Palestinians and Israelis working nonviolently to end the occupation and resolve the conflict. I felt compelled to act.

For me, it all started when I met a handful of Israeli refusals on the ground who embodied the values that I most admire: integrity, courage, fairness, a commitment to pluralism and personal responsibility. I wondered who else was out there and wished there was a place I could turn to for companionship, for models to emulate, for people like them, on both sides of the Green Line, working for change. Not the politicians or militants, but the pragmatic visionaries. I didn't find what I was looking for.

Several years later as a full-time media maven for human rights defenders, I decided to interview Israeli conscientious objectors and Israeli peace-builders, human rights activists and nonviolence leaders. I wanted to find out what they needed, what obstacles they faced and how I could help.

This was how Just Vision was born.

Today, Just Vision supports Palestinian leaders as we lay against many odds, facing well-resourced and influential challengers. We their talented struggle for freedom, dignity, security and peace has the moral force of history behind it. At Just Vision we are committed to helping them succeed.

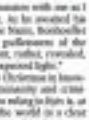
* * *

EIGHT few weeks we publish another interview with a pragmatic visionary on our website in Arabic, Hebrew and English. I am proud of the global footprint we have created, but one else flourished by the lack ahead.

Since I first visited the Holy Shrine at the height of the Second Intifada in 2003, I have seen the ter assumptions underlying our work move from the margins to the mainstream: that ordinary people—not politicians—will lead us to peace; that nonviolence is the best way to bring the occupation and the conflict to a (hopefully) end, and that unity across divides—whether it is among men and women, Palestinians and Israelis, or people of different political persuasions—is the greatest hope we have for a fairer, rights-respecting and secure future for both peoples.

Our politicians need to catch up, but in the meantime university students, faith leaders, refugee camp residents, women's groups, civic organizations and journalists across Palestine, Israel, America and around the world get it. They are seeking upon a fragile but very ripe moment to build a different future for us all. And we're right there with them.

A prisoner's Christmas



WORLD VIEW

Yuliya Tymoshenko

LUKYANIVSKA PRISON, Kyiv—It has been said that there are no atheists in a bunker. Here, after my three trial-and-four and a half months in a cell, I have discovered that there are no atheists in prison, either.

When, despite unbearable pain, you are interrogated—including in your cell—for dozens of hours without a break, and an authoritarian regime's entire system of coercion, including media, is trying to discredit and destroy you once and for all, prayer becomes the only intimate, trusting and reassuring conversation that one can have. God, one realizes, is one's only friend and only available family, because, deprived even of access to a trusted priest, there is no one else in whom to confide one's worries and hopes.

In this context of love-and-loss, the loneliness of a prison cell is almost unbearable. The gray dead silence of night (guards peer in nonstop, only through a slot in the door), the sudden, thin, embodied shrieks of prisoners, shrieks of distress and rage, the distant smiles and clangs of prison locks: all make deep impossible, or so restless as to be a torment.

But what is strange is that your senses are not dulled by this dead and dreadful world. On the contrary, they are ignited by it: your mind is set free from mundane concerns to ponder the rare, invisible and your place within it—a kindness of spirit that is all unexpected gift this Christmas season to the cell's darkness. I gather strength and hope from the fact that God sometimes sends us time in our lives. For whom else would Christ be but with those who suffer and are persecuted?

Indeed, I have recently been reading Dietrich Bonhoeffer's sublime and challenging "Letters from Prison," in which he points for a Christian capable of offering mercy to a world, one world, that in the process of being martyred for a single man. Written in a cramped, dank and putrid cell, where hope was meant to die before the body, Bonhoeffer crafted a book rich in faith, optimism, possibility, and, yes, hope...even in humanity's darkest hour.

One particular passage resonates with me as I contemplate Ukraine's plight. In he insisted that apparently overwhelming opposition by the Nazis, Bonhoeffer wrote that, in prison, "the godlessness of the world is not . . . concealed but, rather, revealed, and it thus exposed to an unexpected light."

So I take some comfort this Christmas in knowing that the godlessness, inhumanity and criminality of the regime that is now ruling in Kyiv is, at long last, being exposed to the world in a clear light. Its democratic posturing has been unmasked as cynical political theater; its claim to do so a European future for Ukraine's people revealed to be a lie, and the ruthlessness of its oppression has been laid bare. The world is now ready for confrontation and the rule of law is now undeniable, and that clarity is empowering.

More importantly, the suffering of Ukraine's people has also become more widely known, and we are no longer on alone in our plight. Affection for it has been demonstrated in an unprecedented manner and around the world. The outpouring of passion, unified media and shakedowns and collusion of businessmen for fellow all points from Mafia state on European border. Now our European friends can no longer deny the smug vileness of the regime with which they are forced to deal. And I am thankful this Christmas for being able to believe that democratic Europe will not tolerate this state of affairs. Ukrainians will be strong knowing that they are not alone in their fight.

I do not pretend to be an expert on religious faith and spiritual values. I am only a believer who cannot accept that our existence is the result of some freak cosmic accident. We are, I believe, part of a mysterious but meaningful, whose source, direction and purpose, though difficult to grasp at times, does have meaning and purpose—even when one is confined behind prison bars.

It is only faith in the idea that our lives matter, and that our destinies cannot be judged by their moral content, that we in Ukraine, and elsewhere, will be able to find our way out of the misery subjugation and despair that have consumed us over the last two years. It is within our power to reverse or extinguish the loneliness and contempt that, now, are by feeding the lurking forces with like-minded people all over the world. I know that we will manage this.

This Christmas, I ask my family and friends everywhere not to worry about me. As Anna Akhmatova, the great poetic chronicler of Stalin's terror, said, "I am alive in this grave." Indeed, I am more alive. I know that the ones who have imprisoned me here.

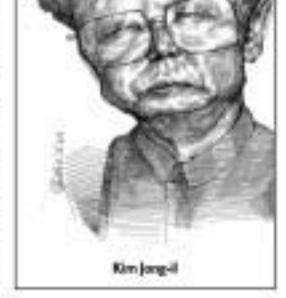
Christmas is meant to mark the possibility of a new beginning for all men and women.

As Bonhoeffer affirmed with his last words: "This is for me . . . the beginning of life."

Project Syndicate

Yuliya Tymoshenko, ousted prime minister of Ukraine, is the leader of Ukraine's political opposition.

IN THE NEWS



Kim Jong-il

Judiciary in a moral crisis

NOW BEGINS that a "tower building" was destroyed at a time when justice was needed most—then came it. I didn't know that property and services to the people can take the backseat to the conscious pursuit of power. I guess that is what nine years of impunity can do even to a country supposedly run based on hope.

The Filipino who is now dying for a law even worth the time of lawyers and court employees. Where were those justices when Davide, Macapagal-Arroyo appointed Roberto Corona as chief magistrate when it was clearly against the law? How they have the gall to warn the people of an impending constitutional crisis when they themselves looked away when the very Constitution they are now claiming to defend was being desecrated by appointments done in the wrinkling hours of the former administration.

No matter how much we decry it, our justice system is only for those who can afford justice. Victims who cannot afford to buy a decision try to look up the words "indictability" and "loophole" and end up losing their cases. Victims whose sons and daughters get raped and massacred some justice only for a little while and only until the aching pride of those who decide on the facts of the case are met.

Time and time again, victims who go against the powerful, connected and brazen end up with less under the ground for maybe less time if the fundster operation is not true dedicated in disposing of bodies) while murderers go scot-free so as to more elections. All this while a lawyer formally offers his body to the Philippine people, a non-governmental order built Freedom for some racists like defendant in the case against her enemies are now used against her, and judges and lawyers hold a court holiday at the expense of a juvenile delinquent who is held only since they're the same priests still where murderers are king, or of laid off airport personnel who have been waiting for justice for 20+ long years, or of a wife of a slain journalist whose only mistake was to tell the truth in a world where lies are admired.

Corona's impeachment and the speed at which it was executed may be suspect, but his lack of moral accountability is not. The lawyers behind the impeachment may be political in nature, but to deny Corona what is not his is to begin with, is immorality a moral issue.

The future of the low says Corona deserves his day in court. The agents of the law says he should not be in the high court in the first place. True, the court holding was wrong because it was a decision of loyalty as one man ruled against us the favor of the people, especially those who fight for justice sooner and more not wait for another day.

I used to believe that those who have lost in life should have been in jail, that the professional executioner for the poor to put things a spiritual mandate to be more Christian but a universal call to be more human. This is the work that our justices, in defending a fake child justice, have not realized. Corona controversial exile, this is a decision left to more moral eyes.

—JAMES MICHAEL DIZON, *Jamesmichael.dizon@yahoo.com*

Brave version of Viloria stopped the best in Segura

IRON, THE "Venetian Punch" couldn't have done it better.

It was another version of Brian Viloria who stopped Giovani Segura in round eight in the former's first defense of his WBO flyweight title. That was a surprisingly impressive performance from the unassuming Filipino champion. Viloria looked splendid in the "Island Assault" championship bout held last Dec. 17 at the Waters Sports Center. He did very satisfactorily in each round not because he has become remarkably better than his usual "workmanlike" fighting style as a technical boxer with zing in both hands, but because he was in his own a lesser fighter, dominating a highly rated knock-out specialist considered the best in the division.

But it was a hard-to fight for the mexican hosts.

Viloria was obviously well-conditioned physically which made him durable enough to withstand the power of Segura. The pressure was on Viloria as the start of the fight, but his range and climatce were useless. He knew how to swing his head and crown and how to avoid much of Segura's punishing. Viloria was pivotal in his offensive and counterpunches and was smart for Segura's game plan.

The Guardian Ranchi-boldface named from the start, as if a garage Semanco had been summoned to by he ads in the ring every second of each round. He block down and beaten upbeforeten landed left sung. The greater was but first me enough, he was heard.

The third round was the turning point.

Supposed "trainer" left hooks were relentlessly thrown by the Jamaican Punch which damaged the upper right part of Segura's head in an unusual way. The orange swelling was not much but painful as which is was enough of may be suspect, but his lack of moral accountability is not. The lawyers behind the impeachment may be political in nature, but to deny Corona what is not his is to begin with, is immorality a moral issue.

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LETTERS

Impeachment will strengthen the high court

I BEG to disagree with the person who say that by supporting the impeachment of Chief Justice Renato Corona, President Aquino is weakening or even destroying the Supreme Court. Corona is not the Supreme Court and as any case filed against him should not be taken as an affront to the co-equal branch of government.

Let us remember that the rest of Corona that will have to rule on the case of the Supreme Court are not involved in the act of weakening the Court. Aquino and his allies in the House of Representatives who impeached Corona are actually helping to build the credibility and strengthen the Court by removing what its inadequacies will continue to plant truth, justice and public accountability over and above anyone's position.

Clearly, the split decision of Corona and his allies are trying to save Abraham Inutero Makabenta and save justice for all the apostle ego (grandparent), apo ning-ong (great grandparent), apo Ang (grandparent), apo Ang (great grandparent). "They have a record of state family are in black and white.

Previous Bonifacio should show us a clear, complete, unchronological record of his family was in black and white to prove his kinds. The more late than the Center for Kapampangan Studies helped him build a chart of Gat Andres Bonifacio on the Gen Zone Elementary School does not prove that he is related to the historical hero.

Moral says. There were Kapampan, cela in Kangan. Therefore Andres Bonifacio was a Kapampangan.

Let me follow his logic: There were Kapampan cela in Bulacan, in Bulacan, in Cebu. Therefore, Andres Bonifacio was a Bulakeño, a Kabanan, a Cebuano.

In case, there are many people in Mainland nominated Bonifacio. Therefore Andres Bonifacio was a Kapampangan. Let me follow his logic. There are many people in Manila nominated Mercado. Therefore, Jose Protacio Rizal Mercado was a Kapampangan.

A record was found in Ayala. Therefore it was made in Ayala. Therefore it was made by Pandap Tita. Therefore there were pro-Spanish Kapampangan kingdom enterprises.

Moral says that, according to his 21st century information, a record called "Barcelona" for "Shakespeare," wherever was the favorite of the 16th-century Kampanese, and the song "sulo Andres Bonifacio" that contained the verses "bulung Andres Bonifacio" was what those Kampanese survived on. These information were not there at that time, I wonder what cited in Mainland to determine whether to believe what they said or not. If Manila was the first one to reveal to the scientific community the existence of clear leaves, they could be given the scientific name *Bonifacius Manilensis*.

—FR. EMILIANITO MAYOR, *ofmmanila@yahoo.com*

Was Andres Bonifacio a Kapampangan?

THIS IS in relation to the article "Record and video Bonifacio ties to Pampanga," which reported on the hypothesis of Francis Alonzo that Andres Bonifacio was a Kapampangan. (Inquirer, 12/9/11)

Moral says that Pinday Pita Angeal nanonua "for dor por Spanish Kapampangan kingdoma." then does he know there were pro-Spanish Kapampangan kingdoma? has he found certain topical sites and/or archival information?

The so-called "three generation rule" mentioned by Alonzo is not conclusive. It goes like this: (1) Sabrina forgot Benito. Benito forgot Luciano. (2) Sabrina forgot Manuel. Manuel forgot Procion. (3) Thin-lee forgot Nilo. Nilo forgot Nicanor.

Nicanor is therefore the grandfather of Luciano, Procion and Sinclair. But Procion says that Sinclair is his great-grandfather.

But which does Andres Bonifacio come to? How is Procion related to Andres? Procion says he cannot specify "because older Kapampangans usually referred to their relatives by only using the term 'Kapampangan' (elder)."

That is not a valid excuse, because there are Kapampangan families and clans—like the Hizon and the Mabalon of Mexico. Are Kapampangan—whose members are popular their specific mutual relationships, even if they use the generic term Kapampangan after the specific apo (grandparent), apo ning-ong (great grandparent), apo Ang (great grandparent), apo Ang (great grandparent). "They have a record of state family are in black and white.

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The Magical. Musical Makati

We will be accepting donations for victims of typhoon Sendong

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Be dazzled by magicians and street performers!
Jam with your favorite bands: Antimano, Bloom Brothers, Silk, The Company, and The Dawn.

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Assistant Editor Tony Hwa-gonia

Across the NATION

Big waves send Ozamiz folk into panic

ILIGAN CITY—Christmas merrymaking in Ozamiz City suddenly turned into pandemonium Sunday evening after extra-cautious residents feared nature's wrath similar to that of Tropical Storm "Sendong" was in the offing from a rain of strong winds, big waves, and a rising tide.

Minutes ago screaming residents and hundreds of families from the coastal villages of Malaubang and Tipanga evacuated to the Catholic Cathedral a kilometer away around 9 p.m., local broadcaster Baptista Institute of Catholic radio (BIR) told the Inquirer by phone.

Souls, residents in other coastal villages left their homes and decided to flee to the national highway as a precautionary measure. Some others rushed to take refuge in the city's hotels, preferring to be assigned rooms at higher floor levels.

Noah's Ark

The cathedral looked like Noah's ark as throngs of people seeking safer ventilated brought along their pets and backyard-grown animals, Institute described.

No one was reported hurt in the evacuation frenzy.

"When interviewed, those who evacuated insisted the strong winds and the seas raised. They even said they feared for a waterspout," Institute related.

Many also noted the rising tide, bolstering their fears, Institute added. "They are anxious about experiencing the tragedy that hit Iligan and Cagayan de Oro City in the seven extra months."

To allay the peoples' fears, the DZRH opened a special public affairs roaming broadcast until the Christmas holiday to announce the real score of the weather.

About Sunday afternoon, strong winds, along with heavy rain were experienced in Lanao del Norte and Misamis Occidental provinces which are separated by the narrow Panguil Bay.

According to a Dec. 25 advisory of the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa), a low-pressure area in the Pacific Ocean moving towards General Santos City seems to confront the northern tip of the Visayas and Mindanao until Monday, Dec. 26.

Around 2 a.m. Monday, Pagasa said the low-pressure area was spotted 30 kilometers west-northwest of Bohol's City, hence, centered to widespread rains are expected in the Visayas, Mindanao and southern Palawan.

Both advisories warned against possible flash floods and landslides due to the rains the weather may bring in the affected regions.

The calendar site indicated high tide of as much as 1.8 meters will be experienced around 11:12 p.m. on Sunday.

Amid the public's concern, Mayor Neva Princess Echavez announced one day[illegible] that the city hall was open for those who do not yet feel comfortable going back and spending the night in their houses.

Deep waters

On Dec. 16, a day prior to Tropical Storm in Iligan and Cagayan de Oro, latter came that included the landfall of Sendong brought 80 percent of the city under deep waters, the worst ever experienced.

Since about five years ago, the city's 11 coastal villages are usually battered by strong waves from December up to February.

Last Dec. 18, on Monday strong winds, big waves and talk of a waterspout swiping out most of Ozamiz City and thousands of people evacuating to safer grounds in Plaridel town in Misamis Occidental's northern tip.

Ryan B. Rimando, Inquirer Mindanao

HOPE FROM MAMA MARY Marian devotees gather near rosaries and prayer booklets to flood survivors at Sitio Tikatok, Barangay Macasandig, Cagayan de Oro City, late afternoon, Dec. 21. AP/LEONCIO KIM BONCALES JR.

Tacloban, North Cotabato town hike land tax

By Joey A. Gabieta
Inquirer Visayas

TACLOBAN CITY—This city is expected to increase its earnings from real property taxes because the city government has increased by 25 percent the land valuation for residential and commercial lots here.

City assessor Carlos Escalona said the real property taxes due to the higher property valuation was estimated to reach P8 million.

The present land valuation for residential and commercial properties ranges from P1.10 to P1,200 per square meter. Codero said the last time the city government revised its land valuation was in 2009. The city has 62,500 real property owners, both residential and commercial.

The city council approved an ordinance on Dec. 14 that called for a 25 percent increase in the valuation of real property in the city to be implemented starting January 2012.

Escalona said he had recommended a 10-percent increase in property valuation but the city council only approved a 25 percent increase.

But the council members had noted that imposing a 100-percent increase would not be profitable, considering the global economic difficulties.

Ariel Uy, president of the Tacloban Filipino Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry, thanked the city government for not pushing through with its earlier plan.

In an earlier interview, City Mayor Alfred Romualdez said imposing a new tax rate in Tacloban was important considering that the city government would lose around P45 million in its internal revenue allotment (IRA) starting next year.

The reduction of Tacloban's annual IRA of more than P400 million was done to the creation of 16 new cities. Three of the new cities are from Eastern Visayas—Calbiga[illegible], Baybay and Borongan.

In North Cotabato, with the hope of increasing its income collection before the year ends, Magpet town has offered prizes for good taxpayers, and amnesty for delinquent users.

Mayor Elmer Pinol has called on delinquent taxpayers in Magpet to avail of the town's tax amnesty.

Municipal Ordinance No. 009 grants delinquent taxpayers a chance to avail of their accounts with paying penalties and interests.

"I am appealing to all delinquent taxpayers to avail of the tax amnesty and settle your obligation to our treasury office the soonest possible time," Pinol said.

"Your taxes will return to the community in the form of development projects like roads, bridges and other infrastructure needed to boost business activities," he said.

Pinol said prompt taxpayers have a chance to win prizes in the treasury office announced a raffle promo before the year ends like solar streetlights would receive a driving out for best payers, rice for second and drawing cabinet for third prize. Consolation prizes such as electric fan, electric iron, and rice cooker also await the lucky winners.

He said only taxpayers who have been religiously paying their obligations are qualified to join the raffle draw on Dec. 29 at the town's gymnasium.

Magpet's treasury office is open even on Saturdays and Sundays to accommodate late taxpayers. *Edwin Fernandez, Inquirer Mindanao*

CPP donates cash, goods to 'Sendong' victims

DAVAO CITY—The Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) on Monday delivered cash donations for its 43rd founding anniversary and "will soon" donate more millions worth of cash and goods to the victims of Tropical Storm "Sendong" in Northern Mindanao.

Jorge Madlos alias Ka Oris, spokesperson of the National Democratic Front (NDF) in Mindanao, said they would donate more than a million worth of cash and goods, channeled through several foundations, including the Bayan, media outfits and local government offices, which are doing relief operations for the thousands of displaced people.

"This time we decided to forego with the festivity because we want to help the victims of the calamity," he told the Inquirer by phone.

"It is a national call and we encourage the masses to donate whatever they can," he added.

Madlos also said they would "obligate mining and logging companies to give donations because it is time [for] who contributed that to the environment."

Madlos said they have to "find a way to gather and raise a part [the donations]."

Bicol

In Naga City, the NDF leader in Bicol said believed that the talks, once successful, could end one of the longest armed struggles in the world.

"We all dream of a real and long-lasting peace founded on social justice. It can be borne out of the success of the peace talks that bears an agreement that will solve the ills of our society," said Greg Bellaneo, spokesperson of the NDF in Bicol.

The NDF-the political wing of the CPP that was founded on Dec. 26, 1968, has fought to overthrow the government through its armed wing, the New People's Army.

But Bellaneo told the Inquirer that "peace" could also be achieved through the success of the "revolutionary war."

"While the peace negotiations has an edge in the talks, it is better to go on with the armed struggle," he said in an e-mailed response to the questions sent by the Inquirer.

But Major Harold Cabunoc, Army spokesperson, said hoisting peace and "local" development of the countryside would early come after the "total defeat" of the armed rebellion.

He said if the armed insurgents lay down their arms and cooperate with the government, the "bloody fighting" would end.

CPP Front spokesperson, Concha Araneta, said the party "is committed to ceasefire[illegible] and more support until communal arbitrations of governmental troops in 2013. Araneta said some of their guerrilla fronts were demarcated and there were guns in arms control.

The military had earlier disarmed the rebel forces in Panay as negligible and only capable of isolated attacks on government troops and detachments to make them persuasive felt.

In December, the military police said other government agencies classified Allan Jacaranga's then after the absence of rebel groups and attacks in the province for the past three years. *Dennis Jay Santos, Inquirer Mindanao; Jovan Corbilla Soltes, Inquirer Southern Luzon; Exster B. Burgos Jr., Inquirer Visayas*

HOT FOOD are distributed by private citizens and civil-society groups for the victims of the flash floods in Cagayan de Oro City.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

NOVEMBER 27 (Tuesday)
Feast of Virgin
John, Apostle and Evangelist
Ps 97:1, 2, 3c-4, 5-6; 1 Jn 1:1-4
Love that you rejoice in the Lord.

1st Reading: 1 Jn 1:1-4

This is what was here from the beginning, and what we have heard and we have seen with our own eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, the Word of life.

The Life made itself known, we have seen Eternal Life and we bear witness, and we are telling you of it. It was with the Father and made himself known to us.

We are telling you what we have seen and heard, that you may be in fellowship with us and we, with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ.

And we write this that our joy may be complete.

Gospel: Jn 20:1-8 and 2:8

On the first day of the week, Mary of Magdala ran to Peter and the other disciple whom Jesus loved. And she said to them, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb and we don't know where they have laid him."

Then these set out with the other disciple to go to the tomb. They ran together but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. He bent down and saw the linen cloths but did not enter.

Then Simon Peter came following him and entered the tomb. he, too, saw the linen cloths lying there. The napkin, which had been around his head was not lying like the other linen cloths but lay rolled up on its place. Then the other disciple who had reached the tomb first entered as he saw and believed.

Reflection:

Today the Church remembers John, Apostle and Evangelist. What further word needs to be said to you the Beloved Disciple, to Jesus he was favored but because he was a dear friend who knows the secrets of Jesus' heart? Perhaps it is because his relationship is not just about following Christ, it is having a personal and intimate relationship with Him. This relationship brings closer love and knowledge that goes beyond the grave.

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Damaguete 'Sendong' victims rebuild homes beside river

By Alex Baja Pal
Inquirer Visayas

DUMAGUETE CITY—Victims of Tropical Storm "Sendong" in this city have begun to rebuild their homes right next to the river.

The homes are now standing on the same spot at the Banica River elder where the bonds were washed away during a flash flood in Barangay 9 on Dec. 16.

They rebuilt their huts unmindful by fear they'd be buried from returning to the area," a man who refused to be identified told the Inquirer.

Mud and garbage still abound in this riverside community that was totally inundated by some eleven feet water high from the mountains, sweeping away things in its path. Luckily, there were no casualties.

Warning

"We warned our neighbors of the potential danger and I stayed up all night that Friday to watch the flood in the river," said Wilfe Dupit, 35, a village watchman. By morning, some residents heeded the higher ground.

Dupit, whose own hut was one of the six that were washed away, said the warning came from the elder. Saturday morning when the water[illegible] "The next thing I saw was the wall of water. I and the other people who were standing on the dike jumped to safety," she said, escaping with only her clothes on her back.

Dupit was assigned to cook for the flood victims in a makeshift kitchen beside the barangay hall. "Our kitchen is open to anyone who wants to eat," she said. Most of those who come to eat are those who are rebuilding their homes.

The evacuees also get relief from city health personnel, who gave immunization for those who suffered cuts.

For Dupit, the tragedy has brought them closer as a community. "We help one another, like we always do, as the task of rebuilding our community will take a long time."

The death toll stood at 37 with 5 missing throughout Negros Oriental. The storm affected 12,200 families, destroyed 1,036 houses and damaged 3,309 houses.

The damage to infrastructure rose to P496.4 million.

Affected were the cities of Dumaguete and Tanjay, and the towns of Amlan, Bacong, Mabinay, Pamplona, San Jose, Sibulan, Valencia and Vinzon towns.

Assistance

The Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council said around P6.8 million was given in assistance in the victims.

Negros Oriental Rep. George Arnaiz said and his family was the worst-hit with 10 dead and[illegible] roads, especially those leading to the geothermal plant that supplies power to Negros and Cebu.

He said there was not much illegal logging in Mabinay, but the neighboring areas of the Candelaria, Hinoba-an and Sibulan were denuded. *With a report from Carla Gomez*

NEWSBRIEFS

■ ZAMBOANGA CITY

Bandits attack Patikul, 3 dead

THE SUSPECTED Abu Sayyaf bandits and a civilian were killed while some other persons were wounded in clashes in three villages of Patikul town in Sulu on Christmas day.

Col. John Antiporda, Canadian Special Forces Western Mindanao Command's deputy commander for Mission Readiness, said at least 40 bandits attacked a Marines detachment in the Kagay-han area at around 9 p.m., triggering the encounter.

More than an hour later, the bandits attacked Barangay Bitis as soon as reinforcements arrived, killing Sonny Sail, 35. Six other civilians were wounded in the attacks.

Antiporda said they also received reports that the bandits were killed and several others wounded when soldiers fired back at them during the first clash. *Jaime S. Aljuni, Inquirer Mindanao*

■ MAGUINDANAO

Bomb detonated

THE MILITANT on Monday detonated a powerful improvised explosive device at a gas shop in Barangay Awang, Datu Odin Sinsuat, Maguindanao.

Maj. Gen. Rey Ardo, chief of the 6th Infantry Division, said the IED, fashioned from two 81-mm mortar rounds loaded in a steel container inside a sack filled with charcoal and left at a construction site along the national highway near the Mindanao Textile Corp. compound.

Most civilians became unconscious of the bomb when it was detonated by two passenger jeepneys undetected some seconds before they left at about 6:30 a.m.

The jeeps, which is about 100 meters away from the 5th Infantry Division headquarters and about 50 meters to one's police detachment in the area. *Edwin Fernandez, Inquirer Mindanao*

■ DAVAO DEL SUR

German found dead

A GERMAN national was found dead on Monday in his residence in Brgy. City, Inquirer Mindanao, with multiple stab wounds, police said.

Hermann Barth, 72, died of at least eight stab wounds and injuries in the head, believed to have been inflicted by a hard object, said Digos police chief Supt. Simeon Gomez.

Initial police investigation showed no traceable entry the victim's house in Poblacion Balabacan in Barangay Tres de Mayo, Digos City, and the killer(s) may have initially left the key to the room and his wallet.

The body was found in his room by his Filipina wife, Gloria Rosario, past 6 a.m. Police were alerted 30 minutes later.

Barth told the victim's wife about 10:00 p.m. the night before he was killed, but the motive remains unknown.

Police said there were no evidence of a struggle but the victim might have been overpowered by the killer(s) due to his advanced age.

Barth had been married to Rosario for 11 years and had been staying in Brgy. City for nine months.

Barth and Rosario left four of his three children in Germany and returned to their home in Manila.

Gomez said Rosario left Barth at home overnight on Sunday and returned home Monday. *Darlie P. Quintan, Inquirer Visayas*

■ NEGROS OCCIDENTAL

15 rescued from flood

FIFTEEN people and one infant were rescued after they were trapped by the rising Lantangan river in Hda. Brgy. Carmen, St. Bernard, Southern Leyte at around 1:30 p.m. Monday.

Marcelino Tan, Office of the Civil Defense in Silay City, said the flooding were rescued after they failed to cross the Lantangan river, which was also collaborated with its deep and swift-watching three members.

Tan said they have placed evacuees in flood prone areas in Barangays Mahayahay and Guinhalaran, St. Bernard, as preemptive evacuation. This would find the residents would be ordered to evacuate if any time, he said.

Jerry Arevalo, information officer of the Municipal Disaster Risk Reduction Management Council, said St. Bernard Plaza have experiencing heavy rains for three days now.

All other residents in flood and landslides areas have been alerted. *Ann Rivas, Inquirer Visayas*

Firecracker ban, limits in Iloilo, Davao

By Inquirer Visayas

THE Iloilo City government has designated areas for the sale of firecrackers and pyrotechnic materials to prevent accidental fires, while Davao City has banned the ban on firecrackers.

Iloilo City Mayor Jerry Treñas Ma-labag has issued Executive Order No. 75, designating the areas, mostly in public plazas in the districts of Molo, Jaro, Arevalo, La Paz and in Mala-Libacled, where the sale of pyrotechnics will be allowed, said a statement by the city information office.

In Villa Arevalo District, the sale of the city's firecracker and pyrotechnic materials during sale of firecrackers has been limited to Ortiñas, JV Seares, Domelo, Bonifacio and Yulo streets.

"We want to ensure the safety of the public, so we have designated these areas to guarantee that no untoward incident will happen during the holiday season," Malabag said in the statement.

The city government has considered the sale of firecrackers and pyrotechnic materials from Dec. 20 to 31. Vendors were also required to get private security for their products and to provide water and sand to put out accidental fires.

Fireland broken out in previous years in December stalls causing injuries and damage to property.

Last year, the Department of Health (DOH) recorded 65 firecracker blast injuries in Western Visayas from Dec. 21, 2010 to Jan. 3, 2011. As of Dec. 23 this year, three cases have been reported in the region.

In Davao City, Vice Mayor Rodrigo Duterte opposed the morning against careless and anyone caught violating the Firecracker ban in the city's city ing they would spend their New Year in jail.

"Once you are in possession of the banned items, even if you're only in transit through Davao City, you're already liable under the law," the vice mayor said over a Sunday television program here.

Davao City is set to touch year ban on firecrackers, poised to be one of the leading causes of death and injuries during Christmas and New Year's celebrations, which prompted the city council to pass and approve an ordinance effectively banning firecrackers. The ordinance, passed in 2001, was the first in the country, although other cities are considering reports of violations.

In the Visayas, bullets and firecracker blasts have hurt several people. A teenager and a woman were hit by stray bullets in Cebu City, Batasan and Cebu City while a 26-year-old man was shot by the uncle after a party in Iloilo City. Ten persons were hurt by firecracker blasts.

In Cebu, a 24-year-old woman was hit by a stray bullet in Barangay Babag, Cebu City. Evangeline Tandoy suffered a bullet wound in the forearm, according to Dike Alfeno, investigator of the Regional Epidemiology Surveillance Unit (Resu) in Central Visayas.

Authorities reported a drop in the number of fireworks injuries in Cebu. But police and health officials had not received any reported cases of injuries caused by firecracker blast in Leyte, Samar and Iloilo.

CHRISTMAS IN BAGUIO

A father and his family—and Teddy (an aswang mascot) who turned 1 1 days on evening on Christmas Eve at Mines View Park in Baguio City.

Extension cord, not Christmas lights, caused Isabela fire

AGNA, Isabela—A defective extension cord of a ridesharing chair caused the Christmas Day fire that killed five people including two children, according to arson investigators.

Grief spread through the town by the Bhanza and Bida families, whose houses burned on Sunday, driven from their dorm rooms by flames. Five were hurt.

Fire inspectors initially suspected faulty wiring connecting Christmas lights for the 2 a.m. fire that claimed the lives of brothers Mark Jerald Bhanza, 5, and Jerald Salvador Bhanza, 7, their grandmother Teresita, 49, their aunt, Jennifer, 26, and Aiel Galan, a home help.

"The Fire Department and the Isabela District Cooperative I foreman gave us their findings and they confirmed that the cause of the fire was the defective extension cord used [for] the ridesharing machine," said Senior Supt. Franklin Bhanza Ibiña, Isabela police director.

Investigators theorized that the family used the ridesharing machine on Christmas Eve before they all decided to rest for the night, Malimong said.

Four of the five survivors ran some out of danger, according to doctors.

Salvador Bhanza Sr., a city grandfather and patriarch of the two children, remained in the intensive care unit of the Dr. Vera Hospital in Santiago City. He injured his legs when he tried to kick the grilled windows of the burning house in the hope to rescue his family.

A surviving grandson, Dean Samuel, 8, is recuperating at the Ilocos Central Hospital where he was transferred after being treated at the Pinpin Hospital on Dec. 25. Dean is the twin brother of Mark Jerald.

Rosario's brother-in-law, Rosario Pilo, 55, from San Guillermo town, his wife, Jenjie, 36, and their daughter, Peachy Ann, 14, have also been declared safe by doctors at the Tumauini Cooli Hospital.

The fire also destroyed 350 packages containing rice, grocery items, kitchen utensils, canned goods and clothing, which the Bhanza family intended to distribute to friends, relatives and members on Christmas Day.

"The Bhanza family members were known philanthropists," said Bulacanian Vindex, a town mayor. Villanueva Bhanza Jr., Inquirer Northern Luzon

Lipa ordered to pay debt to power co-op

By Jovanie Robinos
Inquirer Southern Luzon

LIPA CITY—The Regional Trial Court here has ordered the city government to pay some P20 million to its unpaid power consumption to the Rural Electrification Administration Cooperatives Inc. (Batelec II).

The decision, promulgated on Dec. 19 by Lipa RTC Branch 12 Judge Elmido Amadeo, gave the city government headed by Mayor Meynard Sabili until Valentine's Day next year to settle all its debt to Batelec II or else power supply to all city-owned properties, including the City Hall, would be disconnected.

Sundowners on the deadline issued on the governor under Batelec II's court by the city administrator and the city legal officer that the amount, accumulated over two years, would be paid by dues.

A copy of the court's decision was handed to reporters on Dec. 20 by Batelec II's counsel, Atty. Gerardo Gonzales.

The City Hall of Lipa has accumulated P13.1 million in unpaid electric bills from March 2010 to December 2011 and P9.3 million from July to November 2011 respectively, Gonzales said in a statement, according to the latest summary of accounts handed to the lawyer, as by Batelec II.

Hope

Capendiel said the payment would have to include electric bills for December 2011 to February 2012, based on Sandoval's ruling.

"We hope that the Lipa City government pays at least P20 million, including its bills for December 2011 to February 2012, so we also need to pay our supplier," said Raymundo Elisardo, president of Batelec II.

"If we allow the bank accounts of Lipa City government to increase, the entire services of Batelec II to its consumers will be affected," he said.

Lipa has the highest unpaid electricity bills in Batelec II among other local government units in southern Batangas, according to Capendiel.

Right now, he said they were just waiting from Sabili for the so-called "restructuring proposal," or the payment scheme, to settle the unpaid accounts.

The city government has sailed to hold off the electric cooperative by issuing on Dec. 12 a demonstration on Bergonsal Rd. Batelec II had an owner's permit to operate and 2nd it was allegedly illegal collection of loan members' contributions, in violation of The Cooperative Code.

Capendiel said the proceedings in the charge order were "all lies," because Batelec II has paid P40 million for local franchise tax and real property tax since 2007 to 2011.

Manolo said there was no illegal collection. Even as all of the Tariffs Batelec has implemented were approved by the Energy Regulatory Commission, the body that regulates the operations of electric firms.

Lawyer Regalio Gonzales Jr., the mayor's legal consultant, assured the city would abide by the court's order to pay its 41 elevator bills by February 2012.

Forgotten watch tower needs major restoration

By Horace P. Barges Jr.
Inquirer Visayas

BUSAY CITY—Centuries-old watch towers in this city that used to stand guard against marauders are in danger of literally being buried and forgotten by Carcedonia.

The watch towers in the villages of Dumlog and Cabai are covered with overgrowth and soil with only portions of the towers visible. Some parts of the structures have already been destroyed by natural elements.

The watch towers were believed to have been built by the Spanish authorities sometime in the 1850s or 1900 century as a defense against Moro and Portuguese marauders. It stood as high as 30 feet according to historical accounts.

The late Western Visayas historian Henry Francisco wrote that watch towers were built especially along the coastal areas of Busay Island after the expedition of Miguel Lopez de Legazpi moved from Cebu to Panay in 1569.

Francisco said the organization was established the first Spanish settlement in the town of Panay in Capiz. It was used as a base to further explore and occupy southern Panay.

According to Francisco, the Spanish colonizers had to deal with continued threats from Moro and Portuguese attacks aside from the first encounter of the Panay natives. This is why watch towers were built to warn areas including in Capiz and in the coastal towns of southern Cebu.

Jorge Catalan, 20, a resident of Barangay Dumlog said residents and tourists used to go the watch tower on top of the cliff overlooking the Cabai Bay but through the years, few have gone to the area.

Bryan Reyes, acting city tourism officer, said many Capiznon especially the young were unaware of the watch towers and their historical significance.

He said the watch towers would require major restoration work that would be for, avoid the capsize of the monuments collapse.

"We would need assistance from the National Historical Institute because we lack the skills and resources," Argonal said.

Vice Mayor Ronnie Sudron, who also chairs the city council's committee on tourism, said the watch towers were the historical sites and landmarks being protected by the city government.

But he said the city government will have to acquire a right of way to the watch tower in Barangay Cabai because it is situated on a private lot.

The city council has already passed a resolution each because we need to get possession from the owner," Sudron said.

The watch tower in Barangay Dumlog is on public land but is hidden from view because the area is populated by cliffs and willows.

Sudron said they would need to relocate the settlers to make the watch towers accessible especially to tourists.

ONLY A PORTION of the two-century-old watch tower in Barangay Cabai in Busay City, Capiz is visible above overgrowth and soil. Photo by Horace Barges Jr.

Gov't hit for failure to act on flood peril

From page A1

three months.

Scores of bodies are still being fished out of the waters of Macajalar Bay more than a week later.

"The point is that the country was fully flummoxed about the CDO watershed vulnerabilities," the CCCP said.

A warning UN official blamed the devastation in the Xiluanin (tsunami) region to a destruction in a mountain. Photographs of the city certainly reminded the writer of Ikuda Aoris in Sumatra, which was destroyed in the aftermath of the tsunami that a massive earthquake unleashed in December 2004.

At the fingertails of the Gendong disaster unfolded in Mindanao, the CCCP issued its oft-repeated plea, "Let us avoid another catastrophe ... Let us save the future...now!"

The organization of civil society groups urged President Aquino to put in place an integrated watershed management program "immediately and decisively" instead of a "narrow and selective" rehabilitation initiative.

"The reality is that the whole country is fast becoming a land of watersheds, with varying levels of vulnerabilities. We all live in a watershed," said the statement signed by Lorlaina, the archbishop of Cagayan de Oro, and CCCP environment Christina Monsod.

Poor dwellers

The group denounced attempts to blame the urban poor victims for the tragedy, declaring, "Millions in...stories are!"

It pointed to Ormoc as the "area lack of integrated area planning, integrated watershed management and coherent agro-industrial development program. This also includes "as are others"—the social justice program designed to "ease poverty—and ... encompasses such issues as agrarian reform and addressing the needs of squatters in the cities, fisherfolk and indigenous peoples.

"The dumping of the dead in the dumps is another detestable act. This is unspeakable and unconscionable," the group said.

Over the past two years, in the wake of the disastrous flooding of Tropical Storm Sendong" in Metro Manila, the CCCP has been conducting nationwide multistakeholder seminars, workshops and dialogues with government agencies on how to reduce risks during the post-disaster and communities on the-disaster changes there line.

The team gained worldwide currency in 2006 following the screening of Al Gore's award-winning documentary "Inconvenient Truth." The film, depicting the melting ice caps and rising sea levels as a result of global warming, ended by greenhouse gas emissions in the industrial world.

Climate-change impact

In the Philippines, Esteban C. Godilano, a geospatial-watershed specialist, cautioned in a recent seminar the effects of the phenomenon:

- Rainy days: decrease but increase in higher than normal.
- Typhoons: increase intensity and frequency.
- Temperature: increase by 3 percent, more frequents and pressure 33 Hobo and La Niña episodes of dry and wet spells and increased evaporation.
- Flooding: more frequent, depth, frequency, intensity and severe landslides.
- Humidity: upward trend, can alter geographic distribution of pest and diseases.

Godilano also warned of soil erosion, forest loss and overall land degradation severely affecting 30 million hectares, or 60 percent of the Philippines.

He said that 69 provinces in the archipelago's nineteen watershed were in the grip of La Niña and would be prone to serious flooding and landslides almost year-round.

At least 10 provinces are in La Niña risk in the next three months, according to Godilano.

Biblical deluge

The unusual weather disturbance was first felt in the Philippines four decades ago, when the nation went through a veritable biblical deluge that claimed more than 40 days and 40 nights. The July-August downpours in 1972 turned an area from Metro Manila to Bicol into a lake.

The mood to rebuild this region was one of the justifications cited by President Ferdinand Marcos for his declaration of martial law a month later and assumption of dictatorial powers.

The Ondoy typhoon-in two years ago drove home yet again the chronic risks confronting the country. At least 464 people died in the flooding.

Tropical Storm "Pepeng" followed on its heels with equally heavy killing toll.

Godilano has in fact been pairing together climate change impact maps since 2003 and launching an governance down shooting with officials in the provinces Climate Change Adaptation administration to prepare at least to mitigate the anticipated disasters.

Meeting with execs

The CCCP officials in July 2010 met with Environment Secretary Robert Gazmin, who heads the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council. He got the Godilano maps, expressed appreciation and said that these would be integrated in the government planning.

Also in the same month, the group met with Interior Secretary Jesse Robredo, who expressed awe of the risks and appreciation of the dangers confronting the country.

In January, the group brought up the possibility that Cagayan de Oro would suffer the same fate as Marikina, the worst hit city in Ondoy's onslaught. It presented the differences between the official geohazard maps and the climate change maps done by Godilano.

Mapping controversy

CCCP scientists in February drew up a draft proposal for a P536 million "vulnerability and poverty mapping"—programs discussed with Cabinet officials on the anti-poverty summit early this month.

Unfortunately, material and budgetary support for the Cagayan de Oro watershed plan was slow in coming.

Jose Ma. Lorenzo Tan, chief of the World Wildlife Fund for Nature-Philippines, said he also had worried about the Mindanao disaster three years ago but that he was dismissed by lawmakers as "too alarmist."

Palace reaction

Presidential spokesperson Edwin Lacierda declined immediate comment, saying he still had to verify the changes.

Asked Neither Secretary Corazon Soliman said, "It's obvious the main responsible authority on this is really the LGU [local government unit] and therefore this is something they are already overseeing."

She added it was also "common sense" that the victims should not have been in areas at risk of flooding.

In the bigger painting, the Aquino administration has asked why geohazard maps purportedly distributed to LGUs as guide to climate change adaptation measures never see used.

The CCCP said that the mapping have not been complete and that it was difficult to put all the blame on the LGUs alone.

"In the first place, assuming that these were indeed distributed, these geohazard maps are not in themselves definitive solutions to flooding areas (within the LGU area) but not the overall watershed boundaries," the group said.

The Cagayan de Oro government has no control over the water and debris coming from the 1,714,000 hectares comprising its watershed area afloat filling the provinces of Bukidnon, Lanao del Norte and Misamis Oriental, the CCCP said.

This is why the government needs to adopt immediately "an integrated watershed management regardless of political boundaries among provinces, cities and towns."

"There is an urgent need for technical support in information and education dissemination among the LGUs. Maps are too technical and need to be properly explained in layman terms. Above all, there should be watershed and area planning in the control of climate change, followed by action in support of the plan," the CCCP said.

Plea to P-Noy

The CCCP appealed to President Aquino to carry out five important measures.

- Immediately declare CDO as a protected area and support the strengthening of the Cagayan de Oro River Basin Management Multisectoral Council, integrating the political and administrative boundaries in planning and management and focusing not only on threats but also "on the three Rs—mitigate, restore and study."
- Support the anti-piracy and community-based strategies to disasters preparedness and magnification of climate change maps in closely identify barangays that are most vulnerable to flash flood or rain-induced landslides and other areas as a platform for disaster preparedness and watershed planning and management.
- Declare a moratorium on all mining operations in highly vulnerable areas and the full implementation of the total log ban policy as a necessary first step to the rehabilitation of the degraded environment and restoration of lost natural resources.
- Prepare the most vulnerable 24 watersheds and their watersheds on produced La Niña risks.
- Undertake nationwide community rebuilding of both the urban and rural areas with the concept of climate change adaptation, which can help ensure the safety of people, which especially from Cathy C. Benavente and Leila B. Salaverria

Tent cities sheltering 'Sendong' victims rise in N. Mindanao

From page A1

and the Visayas.

In a news conference in Manila, Press Undersecretary Abigail Valte said the amount was on top of the P1.295 billion released last week that Malacañang had received from the 2011 calamity fund.

"The construction for temporary shelters has already started," she said.

In the same issue, Valte reiterated Malacañang's instruction that displaced residents of landslide and floods in Cagayan de Oro and Iligan not to return to the areas declared dangerous for habitation.

"The President gave very explicit and very emphatic instructions in the [Malacañang Situation Room] and to the [local government units] not to allow residents to return to these areas. We have already seen what happened before. We also appeal to the residents there to heed the call of the authorities ... Let us not put ourselves in danger," she said.

Local officials have also set specific instructions from the President. Valte said residents in areas that would be affected by the new low-pressure area should take the necessary precautions.

Tent per family

Cagayan de Oro Vice Mayor Lucas Jan Acenas also said the schools serving as evacuation centers would be closed to give way to the schools for the opening of classes on Jan. 3.

The Department of Social Welfare and Development has begun setting up tents on school and government grounds. At the City Central School, a tent is shared by at least three families.

Cagayan de Oro Rep. Rufus Rodriguez (2nd district) said he would collect more tents for the evacuees. He said a family should be entitled to one tent.

In an interview with ABS-CBN television, Social Welfare Secretary Corazon Soliman said many engineering units were toiling to build temporary bunkhouses and barracks in Cagayan de Oro.

She said the units would be done in Iligan since the local government found a suitable relocation area.

"The target is to have transition shelters and bunkhouses in the first two weeks of January so families can feel some personal space that they can't get in evacuation centers," Soliman said.

But she conceded that the temporary buildings would be unlikely to be able to accommodate all the displaced, so others would have to stay in tents.

Precautionary Iligan

Fumoa said finding a permanent resettlement site in Iligan would not be easy because the area was "mainly mountainous."

He said the national government had no definite timetable for building permanent shelters but that he expected them to be ready in six months.

Meanwhile, the death toll continued to climb. As of yesterday, 1,160 bodies have been recovered, with countless more still missing, Fumoa said.

So far, 877 bodies of victims from Cagayan de Oro and about 678 bodies of victims from Iligan have been recovered.

Local officials have reported more than 1,000 people missing, a figure that Fumoa, who also supervises the region evidence operations center, said was probably overstated.

Many of the dead remain unidentified and unclaimed at overflowing local morgues.

The focus of the search has shifted to the sea, where bloated bodies are scattered in debris-strewn Iligan Bay as well as Macajalar Bay near Cagayan de Oro.

"The search is lapsing off. The problem is there could still be bodies buried under the sediments of debris in the cities," Fumoa said.

Far-flung areas

Hundreds of army soldiers have moved out to devastated barangays on the outskirts of Cagayan de Oro to bring relief goods and help to major cleanup operations.

Maj. Eugenio Gotan Jr, spokesperson of the Army's 4th Infantry Division (ID) based in Cagayan de Oro, said military reliefers had been deployed to far-flung areas that could not be reached by ordinary aid workers because of major debris obstruction.

"Our troops have shifted to cleanup and relief operations to the outskirts of the city where they are not been reached by NGOs [nongovernmental organizations]," Gotan said.

One such place is Barangay Pagatpatan, where road is knee-deep, he said.

Meanwhile, some 884 families in Pagatpatan were treated by a medical and dental team led by Lt. Catherine Gonzigon of the 4th ID's Task Group Diamond Response.

The 4th ID, headed by Maj. Gen. Victor Felix, combined the medical mission along with the distribution of relief goods because most residents were getting sick since finishing unclaimed one of the most destructive flash floods to hit the country's southernmost island last month.

Gonzigon said the team was composed of medical personnel and resources almost entirely on outreach and relief operations for Sendong victims.

Reports from AFP, Cathy C. Benavente and Delmi Z. Magsino in Manila; and Bobby Lagsa, Inquirer Mindanao

Local gov'ts overwhelmed by disaster

By Ryan U. Rosauro and Bobby Lagsa
Inquirer Mindanao

IRIGAN CITY—The magnitude of the destruction wrought by Tropical Storm "Sendong" has overwhelmed the disaster response capability of the local governments here and in Cagayan de Oro City.

"This situation is unprecedented," said Iligan Councilor Ariel Amparo, a former broadcaster particular who voluntarily anchored a special 16-hour dial to program with Radyo-Bida Iligan-dxIC 828 AM on Dec. 17-23 to help respond to the emergency.

Sendong ravaged 23 of Iligan's 44 barangays, affecting over 41,200 people or almost a fifth of its population.

In the hardest-hit Barangays Upper Hinaplanon, Hinaplanon, Santa Felomina, Mahayahay and Santiago, entire neighborhoods were wiped out.

Some 3,497 families, or almost 14,000 people, are staying in 16 evacuation centers.

Weak command

Before Sendong, the biggest natural disaster that the local government had to cope with was in January 2009, when the Iligan River overflowed and engulfed houses on its path. Big waves battered the coastal communities, displacing some 1,000 families in the barangays.

The local government's disaster response capability was no match to the severity of Sendong's onslaught. During the crucial first few days, the central command center had no organized plan to act.

As the after the deluge, when displaced residents needed immediate relief, logistical and scheduling issues hampered the distribution of food supplies.

It took about four days for the power supply to be restored in various parts of the city.

And a week after the tragedy, the water supply is still wanting because damaged reservoirs, mission pipes still need repair. Private studies of private industries and of the bureau of fire protection have been providing bath and laundry water to evacuation centers.

Muck everywhere

Mud and debris are still heaped under bridges, on trees, and in houses. Many survivors, like those in Siayag Island, believe that their running hit an

WHERE'S HOME? With the rescue flash floods dumping out logs and uprooted trees on residential areas in Hinaplanon, Iligan City, even a dog seems lost in its own neighborhood in the aftermath of Tropical Storm "Sendong."

AFP/CARLOS CELDRAN JR/PHOTO

deep mud and scattered logs still hamper access to the interior barangays.

For the time being, massive cleanup means hunger. For two days, some 30 families left homeless in Barangay Bonbonon, Initao's Alibo Village made do with green bananas that they had gathered from the trees.

Dignified burial

But despite the gaps in the delivery of services to the flood survivors, the Iligan City government is doing right by the dead. The search and retrieval operations are continuing.

Amid the tragedy, Iligan Mayor Lawrence Cruz has kept his bearings and assumed an overseeing a dignified burial place even if some corpses had not to be embalmed.

"Responding to a public clamor for the immediate burial of unclaimed corpses in mortuaries, Cruz had apartment-type tombs built at the Palao Public Cemetery. He also ordered the mass production of coffins to address the shortage.

The making of coffins and construction of tombs employed volunteers from among local government workers.

And in the immediate aftermath of the storm, the goodwill of Iligan's neighbors, such as barefoot and flamingos in Cagayan de Oro, Iligan and Dagumbaan, Initao and Manticao in Misamis Oriental, eased the burden of looking for survivors and recovering the dead.

Help

Cagayan de Oro is also slowly getting back on its feet with continued help from other local governments. Vice Mayor Caesar Jan Acenas said.

On Monday, Magistrados-Gen. Ernesto Mangudadatu arrived with mobile clinics for a medical mission.

He brought some 1.5 tons of fresh tilapia, a product of his province, and distributed 1,500 food packs, 6000 boxes of sardines and medicines.

Acenas said the Davao town vice was cleaning up the streets of mud and debris.

At Wednesday's Homecoming Talmud, the social welfare personnel development officer said "leaders" had been named for each cleaning hosting a number of families.

"In this way, food distribution is orderly," Lim Wapat said.

Editor Teddyvic S. Maluenda
Assistant Editor Francis T. J. Ochoa

SPORTS

Heat destroy partying Mavs

As Dallas unfurls title banner, Miami unveils renewed vigor

LAKERS star Kobe Bryant (24) puts up a shot against Chicago Bulls center Joakim Noah (13), forward Luol Deng (9), guard Ronnie Brewer (11) and forward Taj Gibson as time expires. The shot was blocked, allowing the Bulls to seal an 89-87 victory. AP

DALLAS—In front of a crowd that cheered the return to relentlessness of a championship, the Miami Heat, showing a renewed sense of purpose buried beneath all the hype showered on either squads, showed who they are among this season's favorites.

Wearing a Christmas scowl and playing with a focus fit for this season's conquest, 66-game spree, the Heat pounced to welcome the Mavericks, 105-94, behind a devastating dawn of dunks and defense.

LeBron James was on fire as Miami ran away with the game, taking a 97-69 lead after three quarters.

The game was part of a five-game Christmas opening day to the (delayed) and welcome regular season, after the five-month lockout during the dispute between players and owners over a new collective contract.

Delayed by the lockout, the Mavericks were unable to commemorate the franchise's first title until Tuesday, when they raised their championship banner.

Dirk Nowitzki took several limping glances at the banner was slowly raised, searching the swooning contours of his career finally being memorialized amid a rousing standing ovation.

James seemed desperately in need of such adoration, but he said the Miami Heat were worked away in the visitors' locker room, their emotions apparently boiling for this season opener.

"We heard it, it was very loud," his teammate Dwyane Wade said. "But at the end of the day, they are the champions and they deserve it."

When the game got underway, the Heat's locks were swept aside by the rampaging Dane.

James scored 37 points and had 10 rebounds and six assists while Wade contributed 26 points with eight rebounds and six assists.

The victory may be viewed as revenge of sorts by Dallas' title-clinching Game 6 win and celebration on Miami's home court last June, but the Heat described it as just the first game in a 66-game championship.

"We understand this is going to be a solid journey for everybody with all the condensed games coming now after another," he said. "It's not about last year's story line. It's not about anything else other than trying to establish our season on the right note."

If anything, the way the Heat dismantled Dallas, it was more a branding-iron approval of Miami as the favorite to follow the Mavericks as champions. James and Wade were at ease in playing their own games, attacking as well rather than waiting for the other to create a spark.

"More comfortable and more confident," Wade said.

A simmering suspense illustrated Miami's dominance midway through the second quarter. As Nowitzki maneuvered for one of his fadeaway jump shots, Wade slipped in from behind and stripped the ball. The steal ignited a fast break, and Wade passed cross-court to James, who ruthlessly fed Chris Bosh filling the middle for a dunk and a 46-27 lead. (Brian Bahr/Getty Images for NBA Entertainment)

Rose rallies Bulls past Lakers

LOS ANGELES—Long-time story of NBA Christmas Day reasoning, the Los Angeles Lakers left hearth and home for the 16th season in a row, save once a colder world that no longer sees them as sprinkled with stardust.

Coming off a nightmarish three weeks, the Lakers produced a season opener that did not go much better. They let the Chicago Bulls come from six points behind in the final minute Sunday to win, 89-87, on Derrick Rose's nine-foot floater with 4.8 seconds left.

It was the Bulls' only lead of the fourth quarter.

With the Lakers ahead by a point, 15 seconds left and the shot clock off, Kobe Bryant threw the ball away, giving the Bulls a last chance.

Starting his 16th season, at 33, with a torn ligament in his right wrist, Bryant led all scorers with 28 points. But that turnover was his eighth of the game.

Showing how much things have changed for the Lakers, Rose gathered his teammates in the fourth quarter as Los Angeles were ahead by 13 points and said they had the Lakers right where they wanted them.

"I told them that we've been in this situation before," Rose said.

"They're a new team. They have new players, new system. I said that, they haven't been in that circumstance yet. We've been there."

Bryant and Pau Gasol, Bryant's target with 15 seconds left, have won two titles together and appeared in three finals.

This time, instead of holding the ball where he was pressed in by Rose and Joakim Noah, Bryant tried to pass out of the double team. Deng, coming up behind Gasol, stole the ball.

"I realize they weren't going to foul," Bryant said, "It was just kind of a miscommunication."

The loss was the Lakers' 10th in their last 14 Christmas games.

Trying to halt the implosion, Bryant had one final chance, driving from the top of the key to the baseline, pulling up a floating five-footer, which the long, armed Deng, closing fast again, blocked.

New York Times News Service

Knicks, Thunder, Clippers turn back foes

NEW YORK—The National Basketball Association (NBA) season kicked off gridiron-style on Christmas Day, with the New York Knicks scrapping up a 106-104 victory over the Boston Celtics.

Carmelo Anthony was the top performer for New York, scoring 37 points as the Knicks ran out winners in an exciting opener on the shortened 66-game season.

The season was supposed to start last month but was almost canceled because of a protracted labor dispute between players and team owners.

The Knicks were fastest out of the blocks taking a 34-25 lead at the end of the first quarter and fourth Celtics head coach Doc Rivers fuming at his team, telling them they were "playing soft."

The Celtics had their best night games against the Knicks, but New York, bolstered by the additions of center Tyson Chandler, fought back this time.

Anthony's run: four threes with 10.5 seconds left proved to be the game winner as Boston failed to score again.

In Oklahoma City, Kevin Durant scored 30 points to help the thunder win their season opener with a 97-89 victory over Orlando.

Durant led the league in scoring the past two seasons, including averaging 27.7 last season. On Sunday, he was 11-of-19 from the field and added five rebounds and six assists.

James Harden added 19 points, and the Thunder held Orlando star Dwight Howard to just 11 points.

Ryan Anderson scored 25 points for the Magic.

In Oakland, new acquisition Chris Paul had 20 points and nine assists in his much-anticipated debut, helping Los Angeles comfortably beat Golden State, 103-86.

Blake Griffin added 22 points and seven rebounds as the Clippers spoiled Mark Jackson's debut as Warriors coach.

David Lee had 21 points and 12 rebounds for the Warriors, who cut the Clippers' lead to 78-77 with 9:04 left before Los Angeles pulled away.

Reuters, AP

Packers trip Bears, tab NFC No. 1 seed

GREEN BAY, Wisconsin—Green Bay quarterback Aaron Rodgers threw five touchdown passes for the first time in his career to help the Packers beat Chicago, 35-21, on Christmas Day clinching the No. 1 seed in their conference and knocking the Bears out of the NFL playoff chase.

Rodgers threw a pair of touchdowns to Randy Nelson, another two to Jermichael Finley, and found tight end Jermichael Finley for a score as the Packers also took another round of bragging rights in the NFC's most storied rivalry.

Clay Matthews made a big first-half interception for the Packers (14-1), who notched the 200th win in the Lambeau Field era as no downs home field advantage in the NFC playoffs.

The loss eliminated the Bears (7-8) from playoff contention and put the Atlanta Falcons (one the postseason as at least a wild card).

The victory was the Packers' fourth over the Bears in 2011. Green Bay beat Chicago in the 2010 regular season finale, the NFC Championship game, and at Soldier Field on Sept. 25.

Third-string running back Kahlil Bell rushed for 121 yards for the Bears, who trailed by only 7-6 after the first quarter. But the Rodgers threw the Packers for touchdowns on their next three possessions to put the game out of reach.

Rodgers was 21 of 29 for 280 yards and five touchdowns with no interceptions when backup Matt Flynn took over with 7:54 left.

Chicago came into the game on a four-game losing streak and beset by injuries. But the Bears were able to stay in the game with solid defense and tough running by Bell, who started because of injuries to Matt Forte and Marion Barber.

With the Bears trailing 14-3 at halftime, quarterback Josh McCown found Earl Bennett wide open for a 40-yard gain to set up first and goal on the 1. Bell fumbled just short of the goal line on the next play but offensive lineman Edwin Williams recovered the ball for a touchdown.

With the Packers nursing a four-point lead, and the Lambeau Field crowd unusually quiet early in the third quarter, Rodgers answered by dropping deep and throwing a rainbow pass to Nelson, who blew through the Chicago secondary and hauled in the ball for a 55-yard touchdown. AP

AdHON Rodgers (right) of Green Bay runs with the ball as Brian Urlacher of Chicago tries to tackle him. AFP

PH is Fiba model for 3x3 tourney

By Jane Nicanor

THREE-on-three basketball, a typical sight on Metro Manila's densely populated streets and alleys, will soon be a major Fiba tournament.

And according to top International Basketball Federation officials, the country will play a significant role in spreading the popularity of the discipline worldwide.

"We were chosen by Fiba as a model for its 3x3 events," said IBF executive director Sonny Barrios.

Popularly known as three-on-three street basketball, Fiba, the world governing body in the sport, has renamed it 3x3.

The event is now a major Fiba tournament, which culminates in a world championship after the zonal and continental qualifiers.

Unexploited as the discipline's sentimentality, the Philippines is more than capable to host Fiba 3x3, Barrios pointed out.

"Basketball is being played here everywhere. Even on the streets," said Barrios, who flanked Fiba Asia (Oceania) Vice-President Wong Martolino in a meeting held in Geneva, Switzerland, last month.

"In fact, I was telling Fiba officials that 3x3 is regularly being played by people from all walks of life in the Philippines," he added.

Fiba 3x3 first burst into global consciousness during the 1st Youth Olympic Games in Singapore last year where the Philippine team ranked up sixth among 20 countries.

PHILIPPINE CUP

Injury-riddled Texters welcome break

JAPETH Aguilar is one of Talk 'N Text's front-line pillars. RAFFY LERMA

45 REBLIME and is tough as his nuncio, Talk 'N Text coach Chot Reyes still thinks the extended break should come in handy for the Tropang Texters as they gear up for the fourth conference of the Philippine Cup.

And lifted by injuries to key players, the defending champion Tropang Texters mustered enough strength to clinch a twice-to-beat edge in the playoffs then took just one game to dispose of Rhadiez Bell in the quarterfinals last Dec. 14.

"It was important for us to rest because we needed the long rest," said Reyes.

"It was the driving motivation for us to get that long rest. Fortunately, we got it."

The lengthy holiday should give walking wounded Fritzie Jimmy Alapag, Jason Castro, Jactod Dillinger and Ryan Reyes, together with big men Rainelle Demagay, Aaron Aban and Ali Peek more time to recover from injuries—which has been an issue since Talk 'N Text played the most games in the league last season.

Jakubec and ali, Castro has managed to see off the finest guards in the league and his clutch performances against Rhadiez Bell further boosted his stock. Castro hit a layup in the winning seconds to lift Talk 'N Text to an 81-79 win.

The Tropang Texters returned to practice yesterday, hoping to reach classy form by Jan. 8 at the Toyota Arrowhead when they start their series with three-time Fiesta Cup champion Talk 'N Text is aiming to become the first team in the last 20 years to successfully defend the Philippine Cup.

"Our injured players are undergoing aggressive treatment," Reyes declared. "At the same time, we're balancing rest and recovery with practice and keeping in shape through this break."

Talk 'N Text downed Petron twice in the eliminations round. But the Tropang Texters know only too well how quickly things turn around in a best-of-seven series especially if Sidney got in the mix.

The Tropang Texters also came into the Governors' Cup finals last season as the favored team, but the Boosters upped them in seven games, ending their hopes of a grand slam.

"We're hoping everyone's ready by January 8," said the Amy Boys. Gerald P. Rapan

SCORES covering the collegiate beat say that team Black (left) and Frankie Lim stand head and shoulders above their peers.

Bunyi-Mendoza wrests control in doubles golf

GINO Bunyi and Marvin Mendoza finished the last hole to cap a four-over-par 72 and grab a one-shot lead over Ricky delos Santos and Ricky Velasco in the first-round event of the inaugural SEAF Vineyard Davis Mrs Amateur Championships yesterday at the APF Golf Club in Quezon City.

Bunyi and Mendoza finished with a 37-35 card at five-strand for a double bogey on No. 14 with their closing birdie to forge ahead in the 54-hole tournament conducted by the Philippine Golf Association of the Philippines.

Dr. Ito Santos and Nelson Arboneldo from an opening 40 with a 33 to salvage a 77 while three teams, including the Johnny Carlos-Raymundo Gonzales tandem, moved at 78 going into today's four-ball (best-ball) format in the event presented by Globe, AirPhil Express and Pancake House.

Carlos and Gonzales never recovered from a bogey-double bogey start and hobbled home with a 39-39 card although they remained in contention in the competitive Group 1 division along with the Jose Huerta-Lorenzo Colombini and the Eric Gallardo-JP De Guzman at 74.

Antero Mata and Agustin Mata fashed out with a 37 for a 75 as they tied the John Tiongson-Pody Amora tandem at sixth while Bobby Ramos and Rayt Tolentino (87), Carlo Decking and Carlos Decking (99) and Carlo Villanueva and Quinto Diaz (100).

Sara Martinez and Chanelle Asuncion, on the other hand, turned in a 77 to gain a three-shot lead over Bianca Pagdanganan and Shalom del Rosario in the ladies' side of the event featuring members of the national pool and the top campaigners from the country's leading clubs.

Sandella Uy and Mari Monasterio struggled in the alternate shot format with an 85 but are expected to bounce back in the best-ball and the combined aggregate in the final round to recover.

Black, Lim named top coaches

By Cedell P. Tapus

TWO CHAMPION coaches will share the limelight when the UAAP/NCAA Press Corps and Smart hold the Collegiate Basketball Awards on Jan. 21.

Alvarez Guillen Mariano Black, who steered the Eagles to a fourth straight UAAP title, and Frankie Lim of NCAA back-to-back titlist Lim Boo-sik will share crowds of the year honors for the third time in the annual event at the Conrado Yuzon in Gubat.

In another remarkable campaign, Black took a well-drilled and disciplined Ateneo squad in the UAAP season with a good mix of rookies and veterans on his roster.

A first believer of the maxim that "defense wins championships," Black, a retired dean coach in the PBA, will be receiving his fourth coach of the year award.

The Eagles finished the season with a 15-1 record, earned University of Santo Tomas in the Final Four, before sweeping Far Eastern U in the best-of-three finals.

Black capped the year with an accomplishment in the international front by steering the Blue Eagles to a gold medal run in the 2011 Southeast Asian Games last November in Indonesia.

Lim will get his third crown as he helped mentored San Beda's success just a year after the Lions achieved a perfect season in the NCAA.

Squeezing the best out of his role players to the absence of former MVP Ranbir Bansal, Lim piloted the Lions to a 14-2 record, before eliminating Jose Rizal U in the Final Four.

Pumped against a familiar foe in Ateneo Sabanatan in the finals, the Lions—Gilas Lim's instructions to watch—came up with a key of a buzzing series for a second Fabig 18th crown. It was Lim's fourth title in five years as coach of his alma mater.

Black's two prized rookies in Eddy Serrano and Greg Slaughter are also part of the Mythical Five that will be announced during the program.

Lim joins Lions shooting guard Garvo Lanete in the honor roll, which also includes Bobby Ray Parks of Hawaii (Saviour), and Calvin Abueva of San Sebastian.

Jungolfers play for 'Sendong' victims

SOME of the country's top junior golfers headed by brothers John Levine and Pro'dyzon "Dell" Lagmay III and Adrie Diaz will compete in the Amateur Golf "Run A Cause" tilefest the Ayala Greenfield Golf and Leisure Club in Sucoro Poblacion, Gilanda City, Laguna.

Proceeds from the two-day event, jointly organized by the Jungolfers League and the Amygolf Foundation of the Philippines will go to the victims of Typhoon "Sendong" (Washi).

Competition will be in Class A (15-17 years), Class B (13-14), Class C (11-12), Class D (9-10), Class E (7-8) and Class F (6-years-old and below).

PFF also joining Asian under-22 tournament next year

AMANETA

By Cedell P. Tapus

THE PHILIPPINE Football Federation (PFF) will join the senior international tournament next year adding the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) Championship Under-22 qualifiers to an already packed schedule for 2012.

No venue or date has been announced yet for the tournament, but PFF president Mariano "Nonong" Araneta yesterday confirmed that the federation will be sending a team to the maiden staging of the event.

"We want to join as many tournaments as possible," said Araneta.

The main tournament, which will have 16 teams, including the host country is slated in 2013.

Hoping to riff the competition, we now after the Under-19 level, the AFC plans to make the Under-22 Championship a blended event with the 2013 tournament doubling as a qualifying tournament for the Olympic Games in 2016.

The PFF's busy schedule for 2012 also includes the Suzuki Bolkiah Trophy competition in Brunei, where the country plans to send an Under-23 team in February as well as the AFC Challenge Cup in Nepal and the Suzuki Cup for the debate.

SPORTSWATCH

Maga, PH chess Olympian, 52

GRAND four-time Olympian and chess master Mortimer Maga, died Monday due to cardiac arrest. He was 52.

The Davao City native Maga, a former chess instructor of the famous Ellis Elementary, was also the Region 1 head director coordinator of the National Chess Federation of the Philippines (NCFP).

He remains first chair at the Ellipa residence on Br. 68 Sto. Nino St., Buhangin, Brgy. Sportsville Compost City. Interment will be announced later.

Big4 dartfest set today

THE "second installment" open of competitions will again be displayed today when hundreds of darts are fixtured in the "Bring Darters—Hailing to Cebu" a Classified Doubles and Women's Singles charity tournament at 9:45 p.m. at the SM Golf of the Metropolitan Theater Mabini, Manila.

The "darts for a cause" tournament which started in 2004 has always allowed avid cohorts to compete and only for the top scorer had to be a part of a fund-raiser.

By Top Choice
At Santa Ana Park

Race 1—Pick 6 (7)—Speed (6) Rubio (1) Royal Tiger (6) (7) Tapay's Choice (4) Mariquit Sidney (5) Dela Cruz Cowboy (3)

Race 2—(1) Sun Cowboy (2) Tabang Tomas (3) Tapadora Arcilla (4)

Race 3—(1) Pinoy Sol Tito—Sam Benjamin (2) Sam Gerbert (3) Tabang Tomas (4) Pandabuenas (5) Sam Dancy (6) Pin Bonito (8)

Race 4—(1) Sun Cowboy (2) Tabang Tomas (3) Tapadora Arcilla (4) Sam Pinoy (5) Rosales (6) Sam Speed (8)

Race 5—(1) Pinoy Sol Tito—Sam Johnny (2) Sam Gerbert (3) Tapadora Arcilla (4) Sam Pinoy (5) Rosales (6) Sam Speed (8)

Race 6—(1) Lady Alpine (2) Kingdom (3) Kingdom's Diamond (4) Sam Kenneth (5) Sam Jessica (6)

Race 7—(1) Lady Alpine (2) Kingdom (3) Kingdom's Diamond (4) Sam Kenneth (5) Sam Jessica (6)

Race 8—(1) Sun Cowboy (2) Tabang Tomas (3) Tapadora Arcilla (4) Sam Pinoy (5) Rosales (6) Sam Speed (8)

Race 9—(1) Pinoy Sol Tito—Sam Johnny (2) Sam Gerbert (3) Tapadora Arcilla (4) Sam Pinoy (5) Rosales (6) Sam Speed (8)

Race 10—(1) Pinoy Sol Tito—Sam Johnny (2) Sam Gerbert (3) Tapadora Arcilla (4) Sam Pinoy (5) Rosales (6) Sam Speed (8)

How big is Manny Pacquiao's charitable heart?

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

THERE are great expectations and everybody with very little money. Pacquiao would respond to the terrible devastation done by typhoon Sendong in our unfortunate countrymen in Mindanao.

All last week we Pacquiao as though he was the President of the country himself.

Actually, Pacquiao had already completed plans to leave for a holiday in the United States with his family when the killer typhoon struck.

"They were booked for a Dec. 23 flight to California," informed boxing expert Herman Reyes.

Nobody could be disappointed after Pacquiao, the single biggest symbol of hope nevertheless, elected to be stranded, as though he was himself a victim of the calamity.

"The vacation was cancelled to enable for the champ to devote more time tending after those who have been miserably marginalized by devastating floods," Reyes reported.

Pacquiao did pay a visit to devastated areas, but more actual is coordinating rescue efforts now to be relief doled out.

One report said he gave P1 million from his congressional fund.

Another report said he donated P500,000 from his pocket.

It was lovely and unfortunate how there were those who seized opportunity over the case of Pacquiao's dominion.

Reports of a new palace considerate the typhoon attack almost at the same time Pacquiao, who turned 33 Dec. 17, was hosting a lavish birthday bash.

In an unbiased note, it was some unnecessary for best given his wide and 450-1 Christmas gift to the from-the-P20-million luxury yacht.

Party would seem be critical whispers saying Pacquiao should have sought out more.

But come to think of it, hasn't Pacquiao become the single biggest one-man charity institution in the country?

This time out, for love of himself, his home and total going all out for the victims.

With International old flooding in, Pacquiao can only be expected to seek other ways to prevent future devastation in his capacity as a lawmaker.

He could work for massive reforestation or use to it that the international aid doesn't go to waste.

A big part of the foreign donations should be used to put in place an international early warning system.

By the way, there was never be a way to stress some how much Pacquiao continues to dominate this sport, after incomparably.

Today alone, Pacquiao will be part of the group that will bring cheer to poor little families in Pasig's Ilog City.

Pacquiao, veteran being asked, has donated P10,000 in the form of a utility point win by one of the affectees in a violent scuffle participants hosted by the international drinking here.

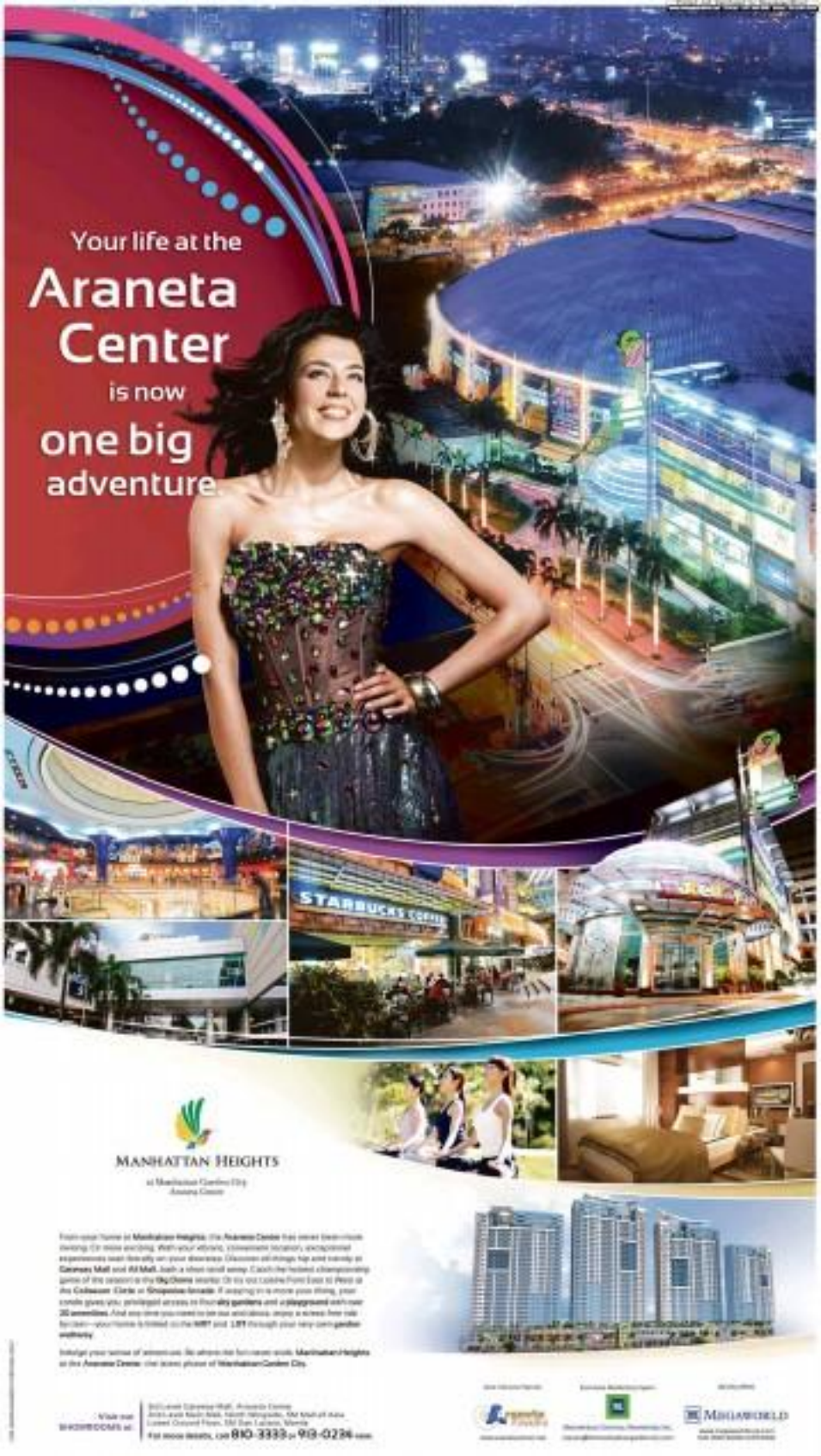
Hero drinker includes Roger and Alexis Mabanta, who were circles and received goodies.

Mindfulness: midnighter builder Ronaldo "Boy Red" Asturias and Ben Tanyao of Lasts Organic restaurant gave 50 packs of boiled beer, Ramon Bautista of Bellevue Hotel and Nicole Robbins of Digital Pacific gave cash and collaborators Hector and Mat Morales of gas brought instant coffee and packed noodles, Ricardo Perlas and Jose Mayo donated canned goods. Dr. Troy Rodriguez too.

As to your cares, Boss Art Atienza will be in charge, with Dr. Raul Bayoy coming all the way from Los Baños City to help out.

Our sincerest thanks to Manny Pacquiao who has become in recognition in this annual affair initiated by the late three-time Olympian Lydia Dela Cruz and brother Patrick Chaves and to entire operations boss "Lydia" Dee.

Thank you so all, Jimmy Cantiveros, indeed.



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Capture bad cops on video, NCRPO appeals

Complainants to get reward

By Nikko Dizon and Jeannette I. Andrade

IF YOU spot an errant policeman, make sure you capture his misdeeds on video.

The top official of the National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO) yesterday urged the public to videotape "misguided" police personnel, particularly those who flee their service firearms to celebrate the coming of the New Year.

"I will not hesitate to discharge from the service those noncompcops who pretend to be peace enforcers [and] yet are offenders. They have no place in our organization," NCRPO chief Director Alex Paciano said in a statement.

At the same time, he took to task three rookie policemen who were arrested after they were caught illegally discharging their firearms in Manila despite a strong reminder from the Philippine National Police (PNP) against indiscriminate firing.

Perkins said that these law enforcers "were not serving the people of Metro Manila, but causing fear in the community and endangering their lives."

He encouraged complainants to come forward, present their evidence and file administrative cases against any policeman caught violating the law.

According to Paciano, the public can forward their beefs against "bad eggs" in the PNP to his e-mail at ncrpo@yahoo.com.ph.

For more information, they can also visit the NCRPO's web site (www.ncrpo.org).

"It pained to wasting [his] career who will help us remove from our ranks those erring police personnel," Paciano said.

Based on reports sent to his office, the NCRPO chief identified the three policemen as Police Officer 1 Lloyd Fernandez, Jhapwood Dacosa and Pidgeon de Jesus.

Fernandez and Sidoro are assigned at the NCRPO while Bautista is with the Crime Laboratory at the PNP headquarters in Camp Crame.

Reynoldo, a member of the Regional Public Safety Battalion, is accused of killing a man and wounding two others on Christmas Eve in Sampaloc, Manila.

According to Manila policemen who arrested Fernandez, he shot and killed Roberto Ayala following an argument with the victim's father who was drinking with other men in the street.

Reynoldo took out his gun and shot the victim thrice after he exchanged words with Ayala's father and demanded that they leave the area in order to carry out his antics.

He then left but after a few minutes, he fired upon two elderly men identified as Jay Valenzuela, 48, and Richard Zaguirre, 52, both were wounded and confined to a nearby hospital.

Valenzuela and Zaguirre were also not drinking in the street when the policemen demanded

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Paint center, 150 houses destroyed in fires; 1 hurt

By Nico Calleja and Jeannette I. Andrade

TWO fires broke out yesterday, leaving around 300 families homeless and destroying a still undetermined worth of paint products.

The first fire started at 12:30 a.m. in the Career Point Center located on the second floor of Mc8 Realty, a two-story commercial building on Marcos

MARKER alleys make it difficult for firemen to reach burning houses on Legarda Street in Manila after a fire broke out in a community of informal settlers.

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Northbound lane of Buendia flyover closed

By Philip C. Tubeza

THE DEPARTMENT of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) yesterday closed down the northbound lane of Buendia flyover in Makati may in repairs.

According to the advisory issued by the DPWH, motorists can use the southbound lane of the flyover on Gil Puyat Avenue, Makati City which will be open to two-way traffic.

It added that the work which began yesterday was expected to be completed on Jan. 8 next year.

The DPWH ordered the repair of the flyover after it was discovered that the asphalt used in its rehabilitation was substandard.

Public Works Secretary Rogelio Singson also directed the contractor—Tidalwing Construction—to remove and replace the asphalt overlay at its own expense.

Singson said the initial repair work which began in May cost between P70 million to P80 million and was meant to rehabilitate the flyover which was constructed in the 1970s.

At the same time, the DPWH chief ordered the implementation of tighter checks on quality control in the implementation of public works projects after the department took a lot of flak from the public over the repair of the Buendia flyover.

In particular, contractors have to prove that the projects they were hired to carry out are in accordance with plans and specifications.

They have also been warned by the DPWH that they and the suppliers of their construction materials will be held responsible should defects come within the warranty period.

PUBLIC works personnel work on the northbound lane of Buendia flyover which was shut down for repair work. JOVEN CAL

'Pressure tests insufficient to show pipeline's soundness'

By Mike Navalos

A BATTERY of pressure tests conducted recently by First Philippine Industrial Corp. (FPIC) on its 117-kilometer long oil pipeline briefly addressed the apprehensions set by the Supreme Court which earlier ordered the Lopez-owned company to verify the structure's integrity, according to the lawyer of West Tower condominium residents.

In a statement, Atty. Jo Imbong said that FPIC passed the pressure of the high ethanol's order which set parameters for determining the structural soundness of the 40-year-old pipeline—the source of the oil which leaked into the 22-story building in July last year, leading to its closure and the displacement of residents.

"A mere leak test for only three days does not answer the burning question of whether the whole pipeline is still in its optimal and proper condition to carry toxic gasoline products from Batangas to Manila on a regular basis," she added.

Their view supported by Manuel Diamante, one of the affected residents, who said that the pressure test doesn't verify the system's structural integrity.

"What residents want to know is if the pipeline will have leaks in the future and how long (its life span) is, so to speak," he told the Inquirer in a phone interview.

He pointed out that since the structure was installed in the 1960s, it has undergone only minimal repairs.

Similarly, the Department of Energy said that it would recommend the reopening of the pipeline which was shut down after oil started seeping into the West Tower basement in July 2010.

A portion of the pipeline, which transports oil products from Batangas province to the Pandacan oil depots, runs near the building.

Supreme said the secretary noting did "not assuage the fear of (Barangay) Bangkal residents—as all the residents living beside the pipeline for that matter—that there won't be any more undetected leaks in the future."

"Up to now, FPIC has yet to do what the Supreme Court is ordering it to do—a full and complete check of the structural integrity of the pipeline. What the company has done so far are cosmetic procedures that neither improves the pipeline's structure nor the company's integrity," she added.

A FIREMAN walks out of a paint center which caught on fire on Marcos Highway in Marikina City. No one was hurt although one fireman fainted due to toxic fumes. MARIANNE BERMUDEZ

Fires hit paint center, houses

Front page 4 17

Highway in Barangay San Roque, Marikina City.

It burned 200 square feet before firefighters managed to put out the blaze which reached the fourth alarm.

Except for two fire volunteers who fainted and smelt of paint fumes mixed with smoke, no one was reported hurt, arson investigator SFO2 Noel Alarcon said in a phone interview.

"We have yet to assess the damage but all the products stored inside were destroyed by the fire," Alarcon added.

The cause of the fire remains unknown as arson investigators have yet to examine the store's electrical system.

In Manila, a 31-year-old woman was hurt after she fell while fleeing from her burning house in a community of industrial textiles.

FO1 Louie Dizo of the Manila Fire District said that Lolita Sabellano, whose right elbow was fractured, was brought to Capitol Medical Center for treatment.

Dizo told the Inquirer that the blaze started at 12:30 p.m. yesterday on the second floor of a two-story house owned by Cecilia Delgado on Legarda Street in Sampaloc, near the Espeta de San Miguel behind San Beda College.

The fire then spread to nearby houses which were also made of light materials, Wilfredo Montano, II recalled the fifth alarm in narrow alleys prevented firemen from coming closer.

Dizo said the fire, which destroyed around 150 houses, was put out at 2:20 p.m.

DID YOU KNOW

Yet first elected mayor of Manila was former cabinet journalist Arsenio Antonio" P. Lacson. A three-time mayor of Manila, he was born on Dec. 26, 1911. First elected in 1951, he was suspended by the Commission of the Presidential Legal Counsel (PLC) in 1952 and died on April 15, 1962. SOURCE: Chronicle, Inquirer Research

Marikina, Manila, Rizal reach out to 'Sendong' victims

By Nitz Cullejo and Jayrose T. Gumil

TWO cities in Metro Manila and Rizal province which also bore the brunt of destructive typhoons are offering help to typhoon victims.

Tropical Storm "Sendong."

Yesterday, Marikina Mayor Del de Guzman issued a memorandum encouraging city officials and employees to donate whatever aid they could to those who were affected by flash floods in Iligan City and Cagayan de Oro.

In Manila, Mayor Alfredo Lim said that the money to be used for the city's annual Thanksgiving Display in front of the City Hall would be donated instead to the typhoon victims.

"We know how it is to go through such agony having experienced it ourselves on Sept. 26, 2009 when (Tropical Storm) 'Ondoy' unleashed its fury and left a great part of our city in a state of chaos," De Guzman said in his memorandum.

"And we also know how alleviating it is to receive relief assistance from those who care," added the mayor who submitted a list identifying what the city had yet to fully recover from the destruction wrought by Ondoy.

As of Dec. 25, the death toll due to Sendong has soared to more than 1,000.

It is in this light that we are seeking your kindness by making donations whether in goods or in cash... Now is the time to return the favor by helping and sharing," De Guzman said.

He said all donations to be received by his office would be channeled to the two affected cities.

Meanwhile, Rizal Governor "Jun" Ynares III has asked the provincial board to authorize a special session to tackle a resolution granting financial aid to local government units affected by Sendong.

The resolution also authorizes Ynares to release a portion of the province's local disaster risk reduction and management fund.

The government and the provincial government employees have started collecting used clothes to send to the flood victims.

The City of Manila, on the other hand, is donating P1 million each to Cagayan de Oro and Iligan City.

Lim said he would be leaving it to the officials of the two affected areas to decide what the money should be spent on, depending on the most urgent needs of the typhoon victims.

At the same time, he offered this message to the mayors of the two areas: "I'm sorry I can't greet you a Merry Christmas because I know you and your constituents are in mourning, especially those affected by the floods."

Give, in order to get

ON TARGET
RAMON TULFO

SINCE this is the season of giving, I beg your indulgence in allowing me to recite more about the benefits of generosity.

I have to quote extensively from the books and authors I have read about generosity since I am just an amateur or dabbler on the subject of prosperity.

However, in applying the principles of generosity to prosperity, I have found them very workable and practical.

Yes, you, too, may benefit from the secrets of the prosperity sages as I have.

In all books on prosperity, tithing is the common denominator.

Tithing is giving 10 percent of your income to charity or spiritual organizations of which you are a member, like your church.

This simple act of giving 10 percent for your income is the power of generosity. By being generous, we create a dynamic set of solutions for the problems in our lives and our world.... In the generous is to generate positive energy, energy that comes back and supports you and attracts you to give. In the words of Dr. Wayne W. Dyer, in his book "The Seven Spiritual Laws of Success," Chopra says that the universe is set up to reward you generously and the more you receive, the more you are able to give. And the happier you become as a result.

A happy life leads to a long life, most especially giving one.

Examples of people who benefit immensely from their generosity are persons who have set up foundations to help the poor.

The more these persons give to charity, the more their businesses prosper. I don't have to mention names because they're all over the newspapers business pages.

These tycoons have learned early in life that the money they give away goes back to them, multiplied several times.

Michael Collins, author of "Rich as Within Four Beach," says: "You cannot hold on to anything good. You must be continually giving—and getting. You cannot hold on to your soul. You must save it—and keep saving. You cannot hold on to riches. You must use them and get other riches to enjoy."

"The Secret," the New York Times' all-time best-selling book authored by Rhonda Byrne, says the same thing.

"Giving is a powerful action to bring more money into your life, because when you are giving, you are saying, 'I have plenty' it will not be surprising for you to learn that the wealthiest people on the planet are the greatest philanthropists. They give away vast amounts of money and so they give, by the law of attraction, the Universe opens up and floods vast amounts of money back to them—multiplied," says Byrne.

Our very own George Siao, multi-awarded "8 Minutes Amida" host, has this to say about generosity:

"Give without remembering, receive without forgetting. Wealth comes from ideas and service. Think, serve and be wealthy. Your prosperity depends on how you say what you already have in your life—your knowledge, your talents, your abilities and your generosity."

So, dear readers, Happy Giving!

NCRPO: Videotape bad cops

Front page 4 17

that they never ran of his way when they refused, he told them.

On the other hand, Sidoro, who is assigned at the NCRPO Regional Personnel Holding and Accounting Unit, was arrested after he fired his gun three times during a Christmas Party.

SPO1 Jonathan Bautista of the Manila Police District's General Assignment Section said that at around 9 p.m. on Christmas Day, Cpl. Reyes Sandy was hosting a party at their house on Bonanza Street in Tondo, Manila, when the policeman walked in.

He added that the Reyeses were surprised because none of them knew him. Even more surprising was when Sidoro went into the washroom of his house.

When he (Sidoro) arrived, he ate some of our food and started removing gibberish to himself. Our guests were frightened and started leaving but when we decided to bar, he started shooting at us," a witness told the police.

At one point, the policeman grabbed by the arm one of the boys, a woman, told her she was frightened and asked if she could leave the house.

The woman managed to free herself and run away after which she and the other guests ran Sidoro take our his gun and fire two shots in the air.

Meanwhile, 18-year-old Jack Jr. Jimenez, a resident of Quezon Street in Tondo, Manila, was shot and wounded by Bautista on Christmas Day.

Bautista was drinking with other men, including Reyes, when a neighbor identified only as Mar allegedly threatening a boy, which irked Bautista.

The policeman then took out his 9 mm pistol, fired it into the air before he aimed it at Mar. Mar, reacting in a scuffle which ended when the gun went off and hit the victim.

Parents of ailing 7-year-old girl need to raise P28,000 for test

By Santiago R. Alvarez

MARIA Isabel Mesenguer, a seven-year-old girl, has been diagnosed to be suffering from complications of spina bifida, neurogenic bladder and leg anesthesia. These ailments have affected her spinal cord which makes it difficult for her gall bladder to get rid of all body wastes.

This is also why at her age, Isabel has yet to walk, according to her mother, Rosemary Hall of her body is also paralyzed.

To make it easier for doctors at Philippine General Hospital to determine the best way they can help her, the young girl needs to undergo magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) as well as take her maintenance medicine.

"The amount may be affordable for some people but we cannot afford it. P28,000 is our daughter's life. My husband Marcelino is just a construction worker," Rosemary told the Inquirer in Filipino.

"Doctors say that if the damaged nerve is rehabilitated, it is possible she can walk again," she added.

Rosemary can be reached at 0922-5274856.

Readers who want to help her can deposit their donations in her bank account at Bank of the Philippine Islands. Her bank account number is 0130022459.

METRO
Citizen's Call
4467

The WORLD

Editor Lawrence B. Chanco

Iran woman in stoning case may hang instead

TEHRAN—An Iranian woman sentenced to be stoned to death for adultery could be hanged instead, the students news agency ISNA reported.

A court sentenced Sakineh Mohammadi Ashtiani to be stoned in 2006 but the sentence was suspended last year after an international outcry. However, reader is to final review being carried out she still could be hanged.

"There is no such ... our Islamic experts are reviewing Ashtiani's sentence to see whether we can carry out the execution of a person sentenced to stoning by hanging," said Malek Ajdar Sharifi, head of judiciary in the East Azerbaijan province.

Ashtiani's husband was murdered in 2005, after which an Iranian court convicted the mother of two of having an "illicit relationship" with two men. For this, she was given a stoning sentence in 2006. Amnesty International says she received 99 lashes in her sentencing. Ashtiani had been suspended due to "humanitarian considerations," but did not rule out the possibility of her execution. "The sentence of Ashtiani will be carried out as soon as our experts announce their view," the official said. Reuters

ASHTIANI

Under Islamic law in force in Iran since the 1979 revolution, adultery may be punished by death by stoning and crimes such as murder, rape, armed robbery, apostasy and drug trafficking are all punishable by hanging.

The European Union called Ashtiani's stoning sentence "barbaric." The Vatican pleaded for clemency and Brazil offered her asylum. The case further strained Tehran's relations with the West, already at odds over Iran's disputed nuclear program. Iran argues the Iranian newspaper told me for saying were detained in Iran in October last year when they were interviewing Ashtiani's son, without official permission, highlighting the sensitivity of the case. The two were released in February.

Iranian authorities discuss allegations of rights abuses, saying they are following Islamic law.

Mohammad Javad Larijani, secretary-general of the Iranian High Council for Human Rights, argued in December that stoning should not be classified as a method of execution but rather a method of punishment which is actually more "lenient" because half of the people stoned to die in Islamic law is saying. Reuters

Islamists kill 40 in bomb attacks on Nigeria churches

BENIN CITY, Nigeria—A series of apparently coordinated bombings struck three churches during Christmas Masses across Nigeria on Sunday, killing at least 40 people and solidifying a recent escalation in violence by a radical Muslim sect.

At least five hundreds were reported, including those at a Catholic church in the capital, Abuja, where a bomb tore through the building and, according to Reuters, killed at least 27 people as they left a morning Mass.

Charred bodies littered the street and twisted cars burned in front of the church. Rescue workers struggling to cope with the chaos hamstrung by the sheer number of wounded and an enraged crowd that initially blocked them from entering the church until soldiers arrived in rocket-cades.

The militant Islamist sect Boko Haram, which seeks to impose Islamic law across the country, claimed responsibility for several of the bombings and was suspected in others.

Coming after several days of pan-Christian last week in which more than 60 people were killed and a wave of attacks in November that killed more than 100, the Christmas bombings were clearly intended to symbolically announce the group's ability in a country where 150 million people are almost half Muslim and fill prevent Christmas. The same group carried out a series of Christmas Eve bombings last year.

But the sect has broadened its targets from its base in the predominantly Muslim northeast, alarming Western intelligence agencies with the suicide car bombing of the UN headquarters in Abuja in August that killed 24 people.

A CAR burns at the scene of a bomb explosion at St. Theresa Catholic Church at Madalla, Suleja, just outside Nigeria's capital Abuja, on Dec. 25.

The first explosion struck St. Theresa Catholic Church in Madalla, about 35 miles northeast of Abuja, which was filled for the Christmas Mass. Witnesses said the dead and wounded numbered to the dozens.

The emergency management agency said it initially did not have enough ambulances available to ferry the wounded to hospitals, and angry crowds gathered in the area impeded the rescue efforts. "We're trying to calm the situation," Shehu Lugmani, a coordinator with the agency, told The Associated Press. "There are some angry people around trying to cause problems."

A Boko Haram spokesperson, identified as Abu Qaqa, claimed responsibility for the attacks in statements to the local media.

The White House condemned what it called "this senseless violence and tragic loss of life on Christmas Day," and in a statement affirmed to assist Nigerian officials "in bringing those responsible to justice."

Hours after the first explosion, a second attack near the Mountain of Fire and Miracles Church in Jos, which lies on the border of the mostly Muslim north and the Christian south. There were no direct casualties from the bomb, but a government spokesperson, Ben Ayelin, said the AP that gunmen later opened fire on police officers guarding the area, killing one of them. Two other bombs were found in a nearby building and disarmed, he said. "The military are here on ground and have taken control over the entire place," he said.

Jos, which lies on the border of the predominantly Muslim north and the Christian south, has been the scene of numerous sectarian attacks that have killed thousands of people in recent years.

News agencies reported at least three other explosions, two in the city of Damaturu and another at a church in Gadaka.

A suicide bomber smashed the Yobe state headquarters of Nigeria's secret police in Damaturu, killing three people, the police said in a statement. AP/MSN, Reuters

Kim's son strengthens power with new post

PYONGYANG, North Korea—Kim Jong-il's son was identified Monday as head of a top decision-making body of the ruling Workers' Party, a post that now gives him authority over political as well as military matters in North Korea.

A week after state media reported leader Kim Jong-il's Dec. 17 death, the campaign to install successor Kim Jong-un gained momentum. On Saturday, state media referred to him as "supreme leader" of North Korea's 1.2 million-strong armed forces and said the military's top leaders had pledged their loyalty to him.

On Monday, the North's main Rodong Sinmun newspaper said North Korean soldiers are upholding a slogan urging them to dedicate their lives "to protect the party's Central Committee headed by respected Comrade Kim Jong-un."

Kim Jong-il, who ruled the country until died of a heart attack, ruled North Korea as head of three main state organs: the Workers' Party, the Korean People's Army and the National Defense Commission.

His father, North Korean founder Kim Il Sung, meanwhile, remains the nation's "eternal president" long after his 1994 death.

Kim Jong-un, who is in his late 20s and was revealed last year as his father's choice among three sons for succession, is the third generation Kim to rule the nation of 24 million. He was named a vice chairman of the Central Military Commission of the Workers' Party but was expected to accept as new military and political posts while being groomed to become the next leader.

Monday's reference to his new title was in commentary in the Rodong Sinmun newspaper, the mouthpiece of the Workers' Party. It came as two senior South Korean delegations arrived in Pyongyang to pay their respects to Kim Jong-il.

Kim Jong-il, who rose to power after his father's death in 1994, was named a vice chairman of the Central Military Commission of the Workers' Party along with Kim Jong-un, who shown on state TV with military officials.

Mourning continued, meanwhile, despite frigid winter weather. Kim Jong-il's funeral is set to take place Wednesday and a memorial Thursday.

People continued lining up Monday in central Kim Il-sung Square, where a massive portrait that usually features Kim Il-sung has been replaced by one of Kim Jong-il, to have before his wailing image and to lay flowered flowers. Heated buses owned by to give mourners a respite from the cold, and hot tea and soups were distributed from large kiosks.

Two groups of South Koreans were among the mourners in Pyongyang. They crossed the heavily fortified border by a two-day trip that included a visit to Kumsusan Memorial Palace where Kim's body is lying in state, according to South's Unification Ministry.

The two groups are led by the widow of former President Kim Dae-jung, the creator of the engagement "sunshine" policy with the North who held a land mark summit with Kim in 2000, and Hyundai Group Chairman Chung Mong-hun, whose late husband had ties to the North. The South sent delegations to South Korea when the country's husband died. AP

'Occupy Wukan' may signal revolts to come in China

By Michael Wines

BEIJING—China's state-run media had a field day that memories with Occupy Wall Street, spinning no-about daily stories of by gritty about capitalism gone amok and a US government unable or unwilling to aid the victims of a rapacious elite.

Occupy Wukan is another matter entirely. The state press has been all but mute on why 13,000 citizens effectively ran over repeated tip-offs by their village elite, sent their leaders fleeing to safety and repulsed efforts by the police to retake Wukan. But the village takeover on its ignored only as Beijing's peril. There are at least 620,000 unresolved protests across China, all small, locally run challenges that frequently suffer the same sorts of injustices that prompted the outburst this month in Wukan.

"What happened in Wukan is nothing new. It's all across the country," said Liu Yawei, an expert on local administration and director of the China program at the Carter Center in Atlanta.

A recent analyst, Li Bin, estimated in an interview that 50 percent to 60 percent of Chinese village-collected grievances and accusations of official corruption. Li said that apparently been Wukan, albeit not as severe. It lends the World and China Institute, a private nonprofit research center based in Beijing that has extensively tracked rural elections and governance issues.

On paper, the Wukan protests never should have happened. China's village committees should be the most supportive bodies in the nation because they are elected by the villagers themselves. Moreover, the government has built safeguards into the village administration process to ensure that money is properly spent.

Village self-administration, as the central government calls it, is seen by many foreigners as China's democratic laboratory — and while elections can be rigged and otherwise suspect, many political scientists say they are, on balance, a good development.

Actually running the villages, however, is another matter. Village committees must provide many of the services offered by governments, such as sanitation and social welfare, but they cannot tax their residents or collect many fees. Any efforts to raise additional money, for things like economic development, usually require approval from the Communist Party-controlled township or county seats above them.

In practice, the semblance of the villages' need for cash and their dependence on higher-ups has bred back-scratching and corruption between village officials and their overseers. China's boom in land prices has only broadened the opportunity for siphoning off money from village accounts.

And the checks and balances—a village legislature made up of top major decisions, a citizens' accounting committee to keep watch over the village books—have turned out, in practice, to be easily manipulated by those who really hold the power.

"Land sales are where the big money is," Edward Friedman, a political science professor and a China scholar at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, said in a telephone interview. "Every local can see how much better the level above it is doing. And each one spends its time at least that well. The system has within it a dynamic which makes people feel it's only fair that they get their share of the wealth."

The opportunities to get that share are vast, apparently. In 2003, a candidate for village committee chairman in Lanjiaowo village, in Shanxi province, spent 2 million yuan—then about $245,000—to campaign for an office that paid 347 yuan a month, the Chinese journal Legal Times reported at the time. New York Times News Service

Sudan rebel chief reported killed by Army

KHARTOUM, Sudan—Khalil Ibrahim, a feared Sudanese rebel leader who mounted a daring and near-successful assault from the war-battered deserts of Darfur to the doorstep of the nation's capital, died on Saturday from wounds he received in battle, the Sudanese government said.

Sudanese military officials said they had killed Ibrahim and several of his comrades during a shootout in the southern reaches of the country. Arab news networks reported that Ibrahim's family had confirmed his death.

A statement posted by the Justice and Equality Movement on its website confirmed its leader's death, calling him a "martyr." But it said that he was killed when his camp came under "an air strike from an unknown airplane that aimed its rockets with precision targeted on the regional's jet fighters." The statement blamed a "conspiracy" by regional and international players with the genocidal government in Khartoum."

Earlier reports said Ibrahim had died in fighting on Sunday.

Ibrahim's death would be an enormous blow to the Justice and Equality Movement, the rebel group that he founded several years ago and that had recently teamed up with other dissidents for a multipronged rebellion against the Sudanese government.

Sudan is home to countless rebel groups. But Ibrahim's outfit was the only one capable of launching a major attack on the capital, Khartoum. The group's fighters had reportedly received training and support from neighboring Chad, which has long been at odds with Sudan's government.

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IBRAHIM

Ibrahim had repeatedly rebuffed efforts to make peace with the government.

According to a statement from the Sudanese military issued early Sunday, "The armed forces were able to destroy the renegade Khalil Ibrahim, who was killed among his group's leaders after a long chase that ended in surrounding him and his forces."

The statement blamed Ibrahim for attacking unarmed civilians and said that "the armed forces were able to end the insurgents' line of retreat that was heading toward South Sudan." Al-Sawarmi Khalid, the armed forces army's spokesperson, told journalists on Sunday that the group's current military moves were an attempt to "forcefully encourage young men from the movement and then head toward South Sudan to join other rebel groups."

Ibrahim is believed to have recently reached out to the leaders of newly independent South Sudan for help in his battle against Khartoum, but it was not clear how or if the Southern Sudanese were to provide him with any material support in fighting Khartoum for decades. New York Times News Service

Rose Iñungo-Ede, Head of Globe's International Business Group proudly shows off the Guinness World Record certificate the unforgettable event in Araneta Memorial with Gil Genio, Head of Globe's International and Business Markets is congratulated by Guinness World Record Adjudicator Jack Brookbank. Witnessing the awarding are OFWFA Administrator Carmelita Dimzon and DFA/NA DG-NCR Rustico Cipe

Globe brings OFW Families together during Christmas and shatters a Guinness World Record!

The Guinness World Record certificate given to Globe for setting a new record in the world's biggest tele-bringle game

Throughout 2011, Globe Telecom continuously implemented various programs both here and abroad targeted towards strengthening the ties of Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) abroad and their families here in the Philippines.

To wrap the year with a big bang, Globe organized a multi-country secret santa or exchange gift event to give tribute to our original workers and their families and pay homage to the innate Filipino culture of gift-giving.

As more and more OFW families registered for the tele bringle event, Globe aimed to also break the Guinness World Record for the Largest Synchronized Secret Santa previously set by UK-based television network ITV which gathered 1,502 attendees held in 12 venues.

Globe shattered this Guinness World Record last December 16 by close to tripling the former record with a total of 3,557 OFWs, their families and friends evenly joined the biggest exchange gift held simultaneously in 16 venues in the Philippines, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore.

In Manila, the biggest gathering was at the Ripal Memorial Coliseum where Guinness World Record Adjudicator, Jack Brookbank, certified that Globe made a new Guinness World Record. "This type of Guinness World Records attempt, which we at Guinness World Records call mass participation, is one of the hardest to achieve. It takes a huge amount of dedication, organization and attention to detail, all of which I see here today in abundance. This event perfectly embodies the spirit of the Guinness World Records and its an honor to be here. Now, setting Guinness World Records achievements is never an easy task and it should never be taken lightly" he said.

"Globe is very proud to be the first telecommunications company in the country to set a Guinness World Record and we are ever proud that this is in line with an activity that highlights the Filipino culture of giving and the significant contribution of OFWs to nation-building. This achievement would inspire Globe even more to be of greater service to the Filipino people," says Gil Genio, Head of Globe's International and Business Markets.

"This record-breaking tele bringle event is the biggest international activity spearheaded by Globe this year. We wanted a program that would be meaningful to both OFWs abroad and their families here in the Philippines. What better way to emulate this Christmas spirit than to host a simultaneous, multi-country exchange gift," said Reza Mastoor-Kuan, concept Head for the International Business of Globe.

This record-breaking tele bringle event was organized by Globe Telecom with the support of Overseas Workers Welfare Association (OWWA), CIBI, of Hong Kong, SingTel and Taiwan Mobile. This program was conceptualized to add more excitement to the holiday season while showing the world how united Filipinos are and how empowered our OFWs and their families have become.

HK OFW EXCITE Christmas spirit was in the air as hundreds of OFWs in Hong Kong were in attendance when they joined the simultaneous gift giving event. The Hong Kong leg of Globe's synchronized tele-bringle initiative was held in partnership with OWWA, CIBI, of Hong Kong, SingTel and Taiwan Mobile.

IN SINGAPORE - Television host Pokwang, who was once upon a time an OFW herself, cheered on the Pinoy crowd who joined Globe's biggest simultaneous tele bringle event held in partnership with SingTel

IN TAIWAN - Proud Pinoy workers converged in Taiwan to participate in the world's biggest tele bringle event held by Globe together with Taiwan Mobile

OFW PLEASURE Thousands of elite family members of the OFWs filled up the Ripal Memorial Coliseum as part of the event in Taiwan were also aimed to achieve a Guinness World Record

IN THIS ISSUE
■ Mining firms, wood producers hit back at critics /B3
■ Gov't debt payment dipped in 11 mos /B6

Editor Raul G. Marcelo ● Assistant Editor Corrie S. Mariano
BUSINESS

Samsung Series 9
Samsung Electronics Philippines Corp.

BIR sees double-digit surge in '12 tax take

Improved compliance may lead to 15% rise in collections

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE BUREAU of Internal Revenue expects to collect P222.3 billion in individual income tax next year—an increase of 15 percent from the P192.7 billion anticipated for 2011.

The BIR said in a statement that improved tax compliance among professionals would boost collections to a double-digit figure next year.

According to Deputy Commissioner Estela V. Bailen, the BIR hopes that the agency's Run After Tax Evaders (RATE) program will encourage people to be vigilant and report those who do not pay the right taxes.

Bailen added the RATE program "scored significant gains" this year, with the filing of high profile cases.

"In the past, the agency's hunting season at the Department of Justice (where the BIR files its complaints before the cases could go to court) was dismal," she said. Those days, "the number of cases that made the Court of Tax Appeals a much higher."

Since July 2010, the BIR has filed 63 cases involving P23.7 billion worth of liabilities. In 2011 alone, the BIR filed 58 tax cases involving P22.6 billion. The BIR already decided on 39 of the cases, 36 of which were in favor of the BIR.

Citing data from the Professional Regulation Commission, the BIR said there were about three million professionals in the country, including nurses, engineers and seamen. Those with high incomes, such as doctors and lawyers, number around 190,000.

At least 20 percent of the BIR's yearly take come from individual income taxes. Bulk of the tax payments come from individuals whose tax payments are withheld by their employers.

PH banks can weather fiscal storms, say BSP

By Michelle V. Remo

WITH the debt crisis in Europe next year expected to go from bad to worse, possibly causing some conglomerates to default on their loans, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas is confident that the country's banks will be able to stay afloat, remaining adequately capitalized.

BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. said that, based on the results of a recent "stress test," the capitalization level of universal and commercial banks in the country would remain above the 10-percent regulatory requirement even if conglomerates were to default on as much as a fifth of all loans extended to them.

"Banks were stress-tested based [on their] credit exposures to conglomerates, and results showed that their CARs [capital adequacy ratios] will remain above 10 percent," Tetangco told reporters.

Currently, the average CARs of universal and commercial banks in the Philippines stand at 15 percent on "solo" basis, and 16 percent on "consolidated" basis, Tetangco said. The latter is a measure of capitalization of banks and their subsidiaries.

CAR, a closely watched indicator of a bank's financial health, weighs an institution's capital against its assets exposed to risks.

Banks are now adequately capitalized due to the rise in their profits, which are backed by an increase in demand for loans and other banking services. This increase in demand for banking services, in turn, is attributed to a growing economy.

Rising incomes prompt enterprises to embark on investment initiatives, which may be partly financed by loans from

(TO BANKS, B2)

INDICATORS

PESO-DOLLAR RATE
Dec. 26, 2011
43.580

STOCK MARKET
Dec. 26, 2011
14.82

Stocks close higher

SHARE prices yesterday hiked higher on the back of combined yearend window dressing and selective equities positioning for the coming year.

The main share Philippine Stock Exchange index gained 14.82 points, or 0.84 percent, to finish at 4,387.36. The "Santa Claus" rally also received a boost from an improved outlook on the US economy, allowing 28 stocks to recoup the year's losses last week.

On Friday, the Dow Jones industrial index surged by 134.26 points, or 1 percent, to 12,354. On Monday, most Asian stock markets also advanced ahead of the expected release of data suggesting slower decline in US manufacturing and improvement in US

(TO MARKETS, B2)

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FREE THE BEAST IN YOU!

Lepanto Ceramics seeks court-assisted rehab

By Doris C. Dumlao

LEPANTO Ceramics Inc., the Lepanto-based ceramic tile manufacturing unit of publicly listed Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co., is seeking court-assisted corporate rehabilitation to get some relief from its financial woes.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange, LCI said it had filed the petition for rehabilitation with the Regional Trial Court of Caloocan pursuant to the "Financial Rehabilitation and Insolvency Act (FRIA) of 2010," which makes court-supervised rehabilitation available for debtors who are able to get more than 66 percent but less than 67 percent creditor approval.

"With the rehabilitation program, LCI aims to achieve the following: Arrest the continuing losses for the past several years; ensure the continuing delivery of supplies; give LCI the chance to rebuild its business by enabling it cash flow directly for operations; and restore the competitive with creditors," the company said in the disclosure.

Based on its latest filing at the Securities and Exchange Commission, LCI has suffered recurring losses from operations and has a capital deficiency of P5.5 billion as of end-June 2011. It had total assets of P1.17 billion while current liabilities reached P4.18 billion. Most of its liabilities are owed to related parties while there are real property taxes owed to the City of Caloocan, which LCI has offered to settle by exchange for its prime property at Bonifacio Ave. in Caloocan.

LCI has ceramic tile manufacturing plant in a 14.28-hectare property in Caloocan. It operates a retail showroom at Tandang Prime Block building. Its products are also available at DIY (Do-It-Yourself) hardware stores and home depots like HOMEbase Inquest, Ace Hardware, Wilcon and Cinderella store.

LCI's net loss in the first nine months of 2011 reached P4.04 million in its fiscal year that ended in June 2011.

Net sales dropped by 7 percent as sales volume declined.

The company has booked recurring losses due to cutthroat competition among local brands and cheap imported tiles. It has, however, reported efforts to reduce its operating cost by lowering total production expenses, such as by using alternative sources of raw materials used here, ... complemented by a more efficient structure.

In an effort to remain competitive, LCI continues to introduce new product lines/designs and product innovation and has focused on niche tile designs.

Closer look at 2012

MARKET RIDER

Dave Sanders

LAST week, I believe I made a very sweeping statement about how this market could be said *post hoc* and on my impression on how the Santa Claus rally would be this year.

This was prompted by the result of our review of the relationship of the market's general trending patterns in connection with the behavior immediately preceding the Santa Claus rally.

Behind the study is the basis theory in technical analysis which claims that while every market movement is the sum total of different and complex fundamental factors, the fact remains that they produce certain price chart formations in recurring patterns.

As I have reported using this basic theory of technical analysis, I based some assumptions results. Such prices were brought on the two to the last five trading days of 2009 and the last two trading days of 2010. This event which comprised the Santa Claus rally of 2009 also become the market's general trading patterns of performance for 2010.

What happened on the market upon that year appeared to be considerably similar to the Santa Claus rally that happened in the last five trading days of 2010 and first two trading days of 2011. Stock prices were already trailing from the begining, and could hardly climb.

As it happened, the market was weak and volatile. Something always came up to knock its advances.

While it made a significant gain from where it started at the beginning of the year, the market now appeared benchmarked it results in 2010.

To where it stood from its vantage point, the market appeared in retreats on the downtrend. It has yet to break its year-high of 4,868.80 established on Sept. 2.

Owing to these observations, I made a tentative guess about what the Santa Claus rally might be this year and what could be the market's performance in 2012.

'11 Santa Claus rally

The Santa Claus rally for 2011 unfolds, so stories, in the first two trading days of January, will happen this week.

As I've said, I believe I spoke too soon about what it might be. This is because of last week's trading performance. But you'll Santa Claus rally may turn out to be only different from what I said it might be.

The total value turnover of stocks at the Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE) last week was almost double of P24.38 billion in the previous week.

At first, the market was able to make a net advance of 67.35 points from a closing index of 4,292.29 last week compared to the closing index of 4,359.64 a week ago. The gain is about six times more than the market's total net advance in the previous week, a pace which makes the market now looks less overbought or prices over the previous two weeks.

To recall, for the week ending Dec. 16, overall value turnover amounted to P28.08 billion. For the week ending Dec. 20, value turnover reached P39.38 billion. In the said instances, the market was able only to make a net weekly advance of 2.08 points and 12 sub-centers, respectively.

Taking into consideration the narrow trending market seen over the weekend, when more positive leads emerged to support a better market for next year, the Santa Claus rally for this year may turn out to be better than what I imagined last week.

Bottom line opin

Our foreign market associates claimed that our market is on the verge of a bizarre market run up culminating in the ghostly economic and business outlook suggested by a number of reports, last mid-week.

Such vision, however, appeals to the new book of Jim O'Neill of Goldman Sachs, where he postulates that there will soon be four additional countries that will become economic powerhouses. They will help "rebalance the economic crisis of both Europe and the United States."

Three of these new powerhouses will come from Asia. One of which is a neighboring country of the Philippines.

O'Neill became known for his work about what he called the BRIC nations. These countries are Brazil, Russia, India and China (BRIC).

As you may know, now these countries were formerly developing economies that rose to become economic powerhouses. They have consumed the world's growth engines.

In his new book "The Growth Map," O'Neill adds three will be added to the nations that will likely to rise. These countries may more than cover the consumed loss the world may continue to suffer as a result of the economic weakness prevailing in the US and Europe. He called these new economic growth engines collectively the "MINT" which stands for Mexico, Indonesia, South Korea and Turkey.

In his new theory, the MINT "will compete hard in the near future" and will rise from being developing countries to economic powerhouses. He says "the BRIC countries are growth markets" that will give blood to global economic health."

Exactly 180 degrees of this vision is the viewpoint of "Dr. Doom" Nouriel Roubini, the professor of economics at the New York University, who says "the BRIC countries are destined for another recession in 2012 on account of partisan politics in Washington."

Another foreign market economist echoed this view with its pessimism. For 2012, which are to follow, oil or BRIC's market are overrun in the housing sector, the euro will finally fail, the Dow will test 9,000, hard will attack here, the price of natural gas will fall to historic lows, ruling is expected new finds, prices of rare earth prices will rise up owing to the decision of China to cut its export quotas to producers. Reasons noted: today produces about half of the world's rare-earth production from exporting countries, environmental reasons.

However, these opposing views are to remain inconclusive to the 9:30am of January for gold values will possibly climb its price to $2,000 and for copper and steel prices to move from sideways to higher.

In the end, experts agree that the US and the global economy will recover sooner than expected. The Wall Street Journal says the economic bulletin of what O'Neill calls the BRIC and MINT nations.

It will be led by China in particular as it flows further its economic muscles in the years to come which, according to O'Neill's study has already "shifted China from a top exporter to one of the world's major importers of US product since the 2008 crisis."

Have a happy and prosperous New Year!

(The writer is a licensed stockbroker of Eagle Equities Inc. You may contact the writer's Facebook or twitter account or by email at www.dsanders.com.ph)

SMB amending terms of ₱39-B bonds

By Doris C. Dumlao

SAN MIGUEL Brewery Inc. has started seeking approval from bondholders to amend the terms of its P39.6-billion bonds, citing the need to disengage from its product line, align with global trade ruling, debt metrics and make room for more efficient use of resources.

The beer unit of diversifying conglomerate San Miguel Corp. launched the solicitation of consent on Monday with a promise to pay P1.25 per P1,000 of the principal amount held by consenting investors. As a consequence, it offered to pay the "early birds"—consenting bondholders who submit the accepted documents on or before Jan. 12, 2012—P1 per P1,000 of principal amount of bonds held.

The deadline for the extension is on Jan. 27, 2012 although SMB may opt to submit the expiration date and the early bird deadline. The advisor for the transaction is BPI Bank.

To amend the bond covenant, SMB needs to get the approval of the majority of the holders of its outstanding 8.25 percent series A bonds due 2014 and 10.3 percent series C bonds due 2018.

The bond covenant requires SMB to maintain consolidated current ratio to not more than 2.5 times and consolidated debt to equity (total indebtedness divided by capital) ratio of 3.5:1.

SMB intends to keep the debt-to-equity requirement but proposes to replace the minimum current ratio with a minimum interest coverage ratio of 4.75:1. Interest coverage ratio is defined as Ebitda (earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization) divided by interest expense for the period.

Bond investors generally expect San Miguel to issue one more six-month obligation when the eight-month proceeds funds and/or by refinancing or accessing the capital market. As such, bond investors particularly put great importance on an issuer's debt level and on the stability and predictability of earnings and cash flow to meet debt service obligations. In the case of the issuer, a leverage and coverage ratio is ideal as it will give investors the trend in its financial performance and an indication of its ability to meet financial obligations," SMB said in its solicitation letter.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

CURRENCIES

Mining firms, wood producers hit back at critics

By Kez T. Dalvanden

Sectors cry foul over linking of big business to Sendong tragedy

LARGE-scale miners and commercial wood producers have hit back at special interest groups linking these corporate sectors to the devastation wrought by tropical storm Sendong in Northern Mindanao and nearby provinces.

In a statement, the Chamber of Mines of the Philippines (COMP) condemned "the efforts of left-wing and anti-mining organizations" to pressure government and to compel it to impose a moratorium on all forms of mining in the country.

The miners' group said the tragedy should instead push authorities to study rationalizing small-scale and large-scale mining under the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

Presently, local governments nationwide give out small-scale mining permits independently.

COMP president Benjamin Philip G. Romualdez said, "The Mines and Geosciences Bureau has established that there are no large-scale mining operations in Luzon's de Oro and Bugsuk. We call on authorities to investigate reports of illegal logging and illegal small-scale mining activities in these areas and to impose maximum penalties on those who will be found to have violated the law."

Romualdez appealed to the general public to be wary of groups who are taking advantage of the situation to offer their Malacañang to pressure the government to impose big, nationwide campaigns to stop all forms of mining.

"Legitimate large-scale mining firms follow the most stringent laws on environmental management and protection, including rehabilitation and reforestation of mined out areas as well as soil erosion and siltation control measures," the mandarin said.

The Northern Mindanao megacity, Romualdez noted, is one of the reasons why COMP has recommended to the Malacañang Palace to expressly repeal PD 1899, which empowers local government officials to issue small-scale mining permits without asking for an Environmental Impact Assessment.

COMP said the unilateral permit system paved the way for illegal logging in Mindanao in February.

The country imported 2,000 containers, each holding 50 cubic meters of logs that found their way to the local market or more than twice the volume shipped in the same period last year, according to DWSM data.

Vasquez said PWPA members have had to pare down operations, leaving go of 60,000 workers in the process.

More than 600,000 more jobs in the wood industry are threatened while illegal loggers are having a field day in areas where commercial wood producers no longer operate in line with the log ban.

The country's tropical forests are home to over 3,000 species of trees, 600 of which are found nowhere else in the world.

Environmentalists have warned that deforestation paves the way for landslides and flash floods, which have killed thousands of people in the country in recent years.

Vasquez said PWPA members have had to pare down operations, leaving go of 60,000 workers in the process.

More than 600,000 more jobs in the wood industry are threatened while illegal loggers are having a field day in areas where commercial wood producers no longer operate in line with the log ban.

Agribusiness rife with import wars

By Kez T. Dalvanden

YEAR-ENDER

There major wars raged in agribusiness this year. One involved the issuance of import permits for farm products and the other concerned imported frozen meat products that were sold in wet markets.

On the issuance of import permits, there were skirmishes in the corn and onion sectors, but on the frozen meats to be holding the center stage.

Rumbo among producers, traders, and the Department of Agriculture (DA) turned especially heated in the case of poultry and pork imports, particularly instead Christmas, when greater consumption of these products offered opportunities for more profit.

Amid all these, the producers observed that Agriculture Secretary Proceso J. Alcala seems to be unclear and proclaimed that there was no rice shortage at the end of the DA's first month in office.

In October, Philippine pork producers mobilized million-weight permits to import a total of 130,000 metric tons of yellow corn—the main ingredient in livestock feeds—without the 30-percent import tariff.

This, as typhoons and flooding in Southeast Asia hampered deliveries from Thailand and Inland parts of Philippine stocks.

The Pork Producers Federation of the Philippines through president Edwin Cham, sought the DA to allow multi-liter corn importation for six months. The Philippine Association of Feed Millers Inc., through president Norman Romero, also wrote to Alcala that 200,000 tons would make up only 15 percent of total supply for feed livestock feed from January to March 2012. The volume would not drive down corn prices, Romero said. Feed wheat can replace yellow corn in the Philippines but not in quantity, he said.

Philippine corn farmers, however, said local corn prices remained relatively stable, and bringing in imports would only further discourage farmers from planting the grain, resulting in a "vicious cycle," the Philippine Maize Federation president Roger D'Rozario said.

'Something smells...'

With more than enough rations in December to last the holiday season, the poultry growers asked government to hold off more import permits until frozen farmers bring their December harvest to market. This, said officials of the Salaysay Philippines Alagang Magsasaka (Sipag), would prevent overstocking of the products and to maintain a stable drop in prices that would hurt farmers.

Sipag officials said there were 12,500 tons of onions in storage all over the country around mid-December. This would supply the 17,750 tons of onion consumed per month in the Philippines.

On top of the current inventory, frozen farmers are set to produce an estimated 210 metric tons of red onions (shallots) in December. BJ Asuncion, onion farmer in Bongabon and Nueva Ecija will also start harvesting in June would supply just top forward.

"[The] inventory [Nueva Ecija has been very supportive of our farmers. We can't control that for late in June efforts who want to import permit now. But we will be making Bureau [bureau] securities if imports are allowed now," Sipag president Francisco Colindo said in a briefing. "If we will just allow import deliberately we will be Christmas season that will benefit from it. That will not benefit our economy at all."

Despite positive signals from Alcala, however, Sipag officials remain concerned. That is because, they said, shipping containers with imported onions are already in port now and not need import permits so that they may start flooding local markets.

Sipag has apparently received reports that import permits are being bid out by up to P500,000 each to traders who say goods are already in ports. In contrast, poor intended shipping policies create many difficulties for local farmers while smuggled goods enjoy tax exemptions, according to Sipag.

Bonus farmers, meanwhile, have been pleading for government support since they have already lost their garlic industry to garlic imports from China and Taiwan. Sipag said that to prevent a food sufficiency, the government should regulate the industry and protect what is left of the farming sector.

All-or-wor

The most heated battle this year, however, was seen to be the point where the United Broiler Raisers Association (Ubra) and allied sectors want Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI) director Elvira Bautista out of office.

Ubra president Gregorio A. Ano Jr. and other livestock industry leaders asked for Bautista's removal in a letter submitted to Alcala on Nov. 10, 2011.

Ano Diego told Alcala in a petition that Bautista has continued to issue import permits even though there is enough supply of local poultry meats showing dispatches from India and similar places which have cases of avian flu (bird flu), and foot and mouth disease (FMD).

The Philippines prohibits the entry of poultry products from countries with bird flu and/or FMD cases.

Ubra has petitioned that 33 locking and the BAI records show imports were from places like Hong Kong, which is not a producer country; Philippine records as not much those obtained from the sources as "partner countries," either.

As early, locking said, BAI and the National Meat Inspection Service (NMIS) let's Desai "results" in their duty to guard against illegal imports, especially those which could bring in diseases that endanger local livestock.

"Below Secretary Alcala, there is dysfunction of duty," locking said.

The Philippines, along with Taiwan and Singapore, are the only land-free countries in Southeast Asia.

Officials of Ubra said in a briefing that in 2010 alone, chicken farmers and their feeds affected industries, such as corn farmers and feed millers, lost P19.3 billion in revenues.

Raising and poultry raisers, already struggling to cope with the high cost of feeds, electricity, and inputs, are dying out with huge volumes of imported poultry products being smuggled into the country through the northern frontiers and special economic zones.

"What is more damaging is that import permits are being issued on the grounds that there are allegedly not enough supply. There is more than enough supply. It is abnormal that we have so much inventory during Christmas season," Ano Diego said.

Industry data show that there are about 419,000 metric tons of dressed chicken alone in stock as of the week of Dec. 11, 2011 from 8,000,04 metric tons in the week of Dec. 5 and from 9,000,24 metric tons in Dec. 15, 2010.

Ubra said other livestock groups are also ready to support Executive Order 26, which is part of the revised rules, regulations, and standards governing the importation of meat products into the Philippines.

Locking said that 40 20 line agencies, including the Bureau of quarantine and quarantine certificates (VQCs), which has become a source of graft.

However, for his part, Ano said that not all VQC holders push through with imports, although industry stakeholders have to turn government rules, conditions must be issued to those who may not use such documents.

Maestro added that there is a ban on products from China, which produces huge quantities of chicken products.

"In this, San Diego and that chicken, eggs, pekin duck, and other supposedly banned products from China continue to be sold locally.

Ubra officials themselves complained — with receipts to boot — from local supermarkets and have reported the incidents to DA officials.

The ensuing anti-smuggling crisis, however, showed "supervising" results since the establishments mentioned in the list

CUSTOMER Jean Paul checks pork sold by market vendor at Bonbon Bacolod market in Davao City. The entry of imported meat products has led to a war of words in the livestock sector

were not.

Ano said that he and his group "are not in the business of politics" but that they are only concerned with the welfare of the industry.

Ano said that he and his group "are not in the business of politics" but that they are only concerned with the welfare of the industry.

Meat traders questioned why the NMIS rules NO. 22 as its basis for implementation, when the order passed without public consultation. NMIS has also not presented any scientific studies to support AO22.

Alcala countered that, contrary to the DA's claim, frozen meat products are actually safer than wet markets because they are kept at low temperatures since the time they are born through the same stringent quality and sanitary standards.

Frozen imported meats sold only are stored in NMIS accredited and supervised cold stores, kept at low temperatures until just before they are sold, are sampled in plastic bins and delivered to wet markets.

In contrast, local wet meats pork is inspected haphazardly by NMIS personnel, the slaughterhouses in the wet markets, and is not subjected to freezing at any point before the sale, the group said.

Alcala also said that some 84 NGOs, which promotes meat inspection, does not make any distinction between wet and frozen meats in its statistics, and that, in fact, dollars meat that has been subjected only to refrigeration (in contrast to freezing) is fresh." The group said it does not understand why DA-NMIS disregards BA 8206 and does not include local government in AO22.

NMIS executive director Jose Rosario, meanwhile, said in a statement that some vendors in Metro Manila and nearby provinces are complaining about the increasing presence of frozen meats in wet markets.

Rosario said that consumers and are questioning their safety.

Sipag producers have also complained that the increase in the importation of pork offer is starting to pose a competition to locally produced pork.

Stricter monitoring

Mitra has said time and again that NMIS would serve the public better if it focused its activities on eliminating "double dead" meat from the market, rather than regulating and disinfecting of the wet markets stalls and foods, and prevent meat of leftover stale meat from being processed into long-lasting, tastier or marinated veal, said to be sold as or incorporated into other processed meat products.

NMIS admitted during the meeting that the committee in the wet market lessen, matters for its own good, and for local-owned meat would have to be for 24 years. It should not the NMIS require that meat not sold by that time for condemned," Ubra said.

Mitra said that AO22 may well deprive low-income consumers of affordable meat and meat products and thus push up the budget deficit as the main market of products to sell and this reduce their business activities and increase the consumers of a wider variety of meat and meat products to choose from, the marketplace of losses to temper the price increase, and instead of the promotion of meaningful competition to open greater efficiency.

Alcala, so far, has not understood how the DA will respond to calls for reversing changes in the way BAI and NMIS are performing.

In the meantime, industry stakeholders are hoping that the new reward that significant changes will come with the new year.

Stocks close higher

From page B1

consumer confidence.

In the local market, the index was supported by modest gains seen in the industrial, holding firms, property and services counters. The financial and mining counters, on the other hand, were hit by profit-taking.

Value turnover was thin at P2.75 billion as many trading participants were still on a holiday mode. There were 71 advancers against 66 decliners, while 49 stocks were unchanged.

SMC, Ayalaland, PLDT, ICTSI, AGI, SM Prime, GMC, MWC, AEV and Belle led the index higher.

Bernie L. Dumalan

PH banks can weather fiscal storms

From page B1

banks.

In 2012, most economists believe that the debt crisis in the Euro zone will persist at new seasons.

Tetangco said that the Philippines would withstand the problems brought on by the Euro crisis, but he did admit that the domestic economy would not be left unscathed.

He said the worsening situation in the euro zone could dampen appetite of investors globally, pushing them to supply hold us to their cash. In that event, investments in emerging economies like the Philippines may be pulled out.

"If the Euro problem worsens, then there is the possibility of deleveraging that can adversely affect the Philippines," Tetangco said. "Nonetheless, we believe we can weather it."

He said the country's currency of foreign currencies, at over $70 billion, would be enough to cushion the effects of a sudden outflow of foreign funds.

The country has sufficient dollars to meet its import and foreign debt requirements in the months to come, Tetangco explained.

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HOME DEVELOPMENT MUTUAL FUND

SUPPLY, DELIVERY AND INSTALLATION OF MODULAR PARTITIONS, FURNITURE AND DESKING SYSTEMS AT BUTUAN BRANCH OFFICE (SECOND BIDDING)

The HOME DEVELOPMENT MUTUAL FUND, Bids and Awards Committee-Butuan Branch (HDMF BAC-Butuan), through the Corporate Budget for FY2011 intends to apply the sum of **FOUR MILLION FIVE HUNDRED EIGHTY THOUSAND ONE HUNDRED EIGHTY FOUR & 11/100 PESOS (P 4,580,184.11)** being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the Supply and Delivery and Installation of Modular Partitions and Furniture for Butuan Branch Office. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at bid opening.

The HDMF BAC-Butuan now invites bids for the Supply and Delivery and Installation of Modular Partitions and Furniture for Butuan Branch Office. **Delivery of the Goods is required within sixty (60) days from receipt of Notice to Proceed.**

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using a non-discretionary "pass/fail" criterion as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of Republic Act (RA) 9184, otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act".

Bidding is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, partnerships, or corporations duly organized under the laws of the Philippines and with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to RA 5183 and subject to Commonwealth Act 138.

Interested bidders may obtain further information from HDMF BAC-Butuan Secretariat and inspect the Bidding Documents at HDMF Butuan Branch Office, Ang Bldg. 7, Calo Extension, Butuan City starting **December 21, 2011** from **8:00 AM** to **5:00 PM**, Monday through Friday.

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from **December 27, 2011** from the HDMF BAC-Butuan Secretariat, HDMF Butuan Branch Office, Ang Bldg. 7, Calo Extension, Butuan City and upon payment of a non-refundable fee for the Bidding Documents in the amount of **FOUR THOUSAND Pesos only (P 4,000.00)**. The method of payment will be in the form of cash or cashier's check payable to Home Development Mutual Fund. The Bidding documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.

The bidding documents may also be downloaded free of charge from the website of the Philippine Government Electronic Procurement System (PhilGEPS) at www.philgeps.gov.ph the website of the HDMF at http://www.pagibigfund.gov.ph, provided that Bidders shall pay the non-refundable fee for the Bidding Documents not later than the submission of bids.

The HDMF BAC-Butuan will hold a Pre-Bid Conference on **January 4, 2012, 9:00 a.m.** at the HDMF Butuan Branch Office, Ang Bldg. 7, Calo Extension, Butuan City, which shall be open to all interested parties.

Bids must be delivered to the HDMF BAC Butuan Secretariat, HDMF Butuan Branch Office, Ang Bldg. 7, Calo Extension, Butuan City on or before **8:30 a.m., January 10, 2012.** All Bids must be accompanied by a bid security in any of the acceptable forms and in the amount stated in ITB Clause 18.

Bid opening shall be on **8:30 a.m., January 10, 2012** at HDMF Butuan Branch Office, Ang Bldg. 7, Calo Extension, Butuan City. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives. Late bids shall not be accepted.

The HDMF BAC-Butuan reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

For further inquiries and/or information, please call Ms. Bernelie L. Magdalera and Pilar M. Bulaclac at Tel. Nos. (085) 8156834 local 30 or visit our Corporate Website at http://www.pagibigfund.gov.ph or e-mail us at butuan@pagibigfund.gov.ph.

BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
BUTUAN BRANCH

By:

(Sgd.) LYDIA H. FORTALEZA
BAC Chairman

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

Amnesty International Philippines is looking for experienced individuals for the following positions:

Human Rights Officer

Responsible for planning, supervising, coordinating and monitoring all human rights work; formulates short and long term plans and strategies; manages, coordinates and monitors implementation and evaluation of campaigns, human rights education, communications, media and publications work

Organizational Development Officer

Responsible for planning, supervising, coordinating and monitoring of organizational development matters including membership development, staff competence and welfare and finance; formulates short and long term plans and strategies; manages the office and ensures compliance with domestic legal obligations

Events organizer

Mainly responsible for organizing the Annual General Meeting (AGM) and the pre-AGM meetings of the organization

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Applicants should be with knowledge of and commitment to the human rights cause.

For further information and application (with resume) e-mail: recruitment.manila@amnesty.org or call 433-2 – 4349166.

Application deadline: Friday, January 27, 2012

Amnesty International Philippines
12-b Maryanong Street, Barangay Central
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www.amnesty.org.ph

Amnesty International is a global movement of people who campaign for internationally recognized human rights. It has more than 3 million members and supporters in 150 countries worldwide. Amnesty International is independent of any government, political ideology, economic interest or religion and is committed solely with the impartial protection of human rights.

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The Entrepreneurs Organization's 2012 Taipan Masterclass: It's all about cash

THE ENTREPRENEURS' ORGANIZATION, the widely known as World Business Taipan Masterclass in the Philippines on May 3rd, 2012 at the Ateneo College, Makati for 2012, that started in Beijing, China and is an initiative of the Philippine chapter of EO, headed by its President and Presidential-elect, Alberto Ayala and Noel Vin respectively.

Being held in the Philippines for the first time, The Taipan Masterclass is a platform for entrepreneurs, a chance to reboot and reshape the five businesses and personal challenges that are to be faced.

The EO Board selects EO members to attend the exciting three day event because it offers us the most appropriate platform to learn and share the latest management approaches to overcoming business challenges.

With the goal of propelling businesses from good to great, the 2012 Taipan Masterclass can't be well-understood, collectively designed strategies and implemented by entrepreneurs for the past and present to take their business to the next level.

The masterclass session committee shared EO's 64 million CASH rule to create the Guiness Book of Records by accountability for the results. Guided by a world-renowned thought leader – practical and immediately implementable solutions and take home value for the business owner and the management team.

Drawing from their years of experience and observations, top business management experts, Jeffrey Thiell and Ronnel Tuason, will put the participants through a rigorous peer on topic about leadership, strategy, Top pacing Hiring, Growing and Retaining Employees, and Building Healthy Teams challenges and team coaching talk.

Taipan pays to your connection, a business life, as we focus on opportunity, to take advantage of the program, limited seats to an "Night of the Living Dead", this is a special screening experience where to compromise exclusive personal or team-driven and living passionate business culture.

Interested parties who can use EO members may also sign up to the program before Dec. 31, 2011 to avail of a 25% discount on the registration fee.

For more information, contact EO Secretariat at Tel. No. +632 784 4333 or through email: ceo@eo.org.ph

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VICTORIAS MILLING COMPANY, INC.

NOTICE OF SALE OF FISHPOND AREA/PRAWN FARM

Notice is hereby given that **VICTORIAS MILLING COMPANY, INC., (VMC)** intends to sell approximately **FIFTY SEVEN (57) hectares** of fishpond area/ prawn farm located at Brgy. Guisok, Manapla, Negros Occidental.

Interested parties may submit their Letters of Intent addressed to:

MS. TERESITA V. ILAGAN
Controller
VMC Compound, Victorias City, Negros Occidental, or
VMC Manila Office c/o Tanduay Distillers Inc.
348 J. Nepomuceno St., San Miguel District, Manila

Letters of Intent must be delivered to the address above not later than December 31, 2011.

For more information, please contact Ms. Ilagan at telephone no. (034) 3993373.

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great grandchildren: Rocio, Nadine, Lucia, Nacho, Mikel, Natalia, Raquel

and siblings: Teofilo(+), Crisanta(+), Pilar, Francisco(+)

ask for prayers for his eternal rest and request that resources for flowers instead be used to help victims of Typhoon Sendong through Sagip Kapamilya.

Celebrate his life with us at Santuario de San Antonio
Forbes Park, Makati where his remains lie in state
and bid him a final farewell at the
9am funeral mass on December 28, 2011.

Our Dearly Beloved

Amelia Kfiatchko Cruz

1ST YEAR DEATH ANNIVERSARY OF OUR BELOVED

PEDRO P. BUENAVENTURA

April 29, 1933 – December 27, 2010

Mass will be celebrated at the

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- Copy of Death Certificate
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Republic of the Philippines
Province of Western Isles
City Government of Calbayog
BIDS & AWARDS COMMITTEE
Isabela Port, Area III, Arellano St.
Calbayog City

INVITATION TO BID

This CITY GOVERNMENT OF CALBAYOG, through its BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE (BAC), invites interested bidders to apply and submit sealed bid documents pursuant to the provisions of the Implementing Rules and Regulations of Republic Act 9184.

PROJECT NO. / TITLE	Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC)
Construction of Seawall Phase One, Lot 1 (400 m) Site and Quezon Drive, Calbayog City	P10,000,000.00

MILESTONE DATE	MILESTONE
Request for Bid Documents	December 27, 2011 to January 9, 2012
Submission of Bids	December 27, 2011 to January 9, 2012
Pre-Bid Conference	January 5, 2012 at 10:00 AM
Opening of Bids	January 9, 2012 at 10:00 AM

Bidding documents shall be available to eligible bidders upon payment of non-refundable fee of P10,000.00 to the above project. All Bid Bonds should be in accordance with the following ratio: a) 5% for Cash or Cashier's/Manager's Check; b) 10% for Surety Bond.

For purchase of bidding documents and Bid Bond in accordance with the Philippine Government Procurement Law.

All bids must be accompanied by the Security in the form of Cash or Cashier's/Manager's Check, or Manager's Check equivalent to 5%, or the Approved Budget for the Contract and a Bank Draft or irrevocable Letter of Credit equivalent to 10% of the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC), or in the form of Surety Bond secured from duly registered surety or insurance firm.

The City Government of Calbayog reserves the right to reject the bidding process, except in cases set up in the rules or guidelines, to waive formality therein or to accept such bid as it deems to be most advantageous to the City Government of Calbayog.

(Mrs.) Evangeline C. Ong
City Mayor/Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Education
Region VI-A (CALABARZON)
DIVISION OF CAVITE
Trece Martires City

INVITATION TO BID FOR C.Y 2011 QUICK RESPONSE FUND

1. The Department of Education – Division of Cavite, through its Regular Budget for CY 2011 under MOOE, an R.O. of Honorable Augusto Syjuco of Foundation Corporation intends to apply the sum of Twenty Million Three Thousand Pesos (Php 20,003,000.00) being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the construction of 2 storey, 4 classroom at Pasong-putik ES, Maragondon. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at bid opening.
2. The Department of Education – Division of Cavite now invites bids for the Construction of 2 storey, 4 classroom at Pasong-putik ES, Maragondon. Completion of the Works is required within Two Hundred Forty (240) calendar days. Bidders should have completed, within the last two (2) years from the date of submission and receipt of bids, a contract similar to the Project. The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in the Bidding Documents, particularly, in Section II, Instruction to Bidders.
3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-Discretionary pass/fail criterion as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of Republic Act 9184 (RA 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act". Bidding is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, partnerships or organizations with at least sixty (60%) percent interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to RA 5183 as included in Commonwealth Act 138.
4. Interested bidders shall submit their letter of intent within the first seven days from the date of advertisement of the said project at the DEPED CAVITE website. Only bidders that signified their intention to participate via the DEPED CAVITE website during the 7 day posting can purchase Bid Documents.
5. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee for the Bidding Documents in the amount of Four Thousand Pesos Only (Php4,000.00).
6. The Department of Education – Division of Cavite will hold a Pre-Bid Conference on December 27, 2011, Tuesday, 10:00 a.m. at the Library Hub, Department of Education – Division of Cavite, Governor Drive, Trece Martires City (2nd floor) which shall be open to all interested bidders. The Pre-Bid Conference is a must to bid bidders.
7. Bids must be delivered to the BAC Secretariat/St. Anthony's A, Carsiang, no later than 10:00 a.m. (Philippine Standard Time) January 09, 2012. Late bids shall not be accepted.
8. All bids must be accompanied by a bid security in any of the acceptable forms and in the amount stated in ITB Clause 18.
9. The Department of Education – Division of Cavite reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.
10. For further information, please refer to:
    ATTY. EVANGELINE C. MANTOS
    Administrative Officer III
    Office of the Schools Administrative Concerned
    Department of Education – Division of Cavite
    Trece Martires City

(Sgd.) **DR. ANABELLA A. MANTOS**
Schools Division Superintendent

Property firm reports big increase in condo market share

FILIPRITT developer Century Properties Group Inc. has reported a big jump in its share in total residential condominium sales during the first nine months of the year.

In a press statement, the property firm said its number share had jumped to 16 percent from 6 percent as of the end of September compared to a year ago. Century now ranks third biggest in terms of presales of condominium units in Metro Manila, based on data of property expert Colliers International.

"In 2011, Century has executed its business plan of differentiating its products and selling to local residents and to global Filipinos. We ever see success in 2011 in the market's acceptance of Arton Urban Residences in Pasay, Acqua Residences in Mandaluyong and the three towers in Century City including Century Spanish Villas, Hillside Residences and Trump Tower Manila," said Century chief financial officer Jose Carlo Sarmiento.

Century Properties, which gained lackluster listing on the Philippine Stock Exchange through electronic firm Kara Ann Forest Resources Corp., was originally incorporated in 1978 as Northwest Holdings and Resources Corp. Last September, its corporate name was changed to its present name as it changed to primary business purpose to investment generation as shares of a holding company and real estate business.

The property group has more than 26 years of experience in real estate. It has a combined portfolio of over 30 completed condominium developments and property management.

Gov't debt payment dipped in 11 mos

PH to establish direct air link with Cambodia

By Paolo G. Montecillo

THE COUNTRY'S airlines will soon fly straight to destinations in Cambodia, one of the few members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations that does not have a direct air link with the Philippines.

During a board meeting held earlier this month, the Civil Aeronautics Board (CAB) gave their unanimous approval to issue a total of 21 weekly flights between various points in Cambodia and the Philippines.

The air link is expected to boost trade and travel between the two countries, both of which are now focusing more on their respective tourism sectors to create more jobs and boost growth.

The confirmation are a result of a 2009 air deal between Manila and Phnom Penh, paving the way for the establishment of direct air links between the two countries.

This is in line with the liberalization of Cambodia's air rights regime, which has contributed significantly to the rapid growth of its tourism sector. From just 700,000 in 2003, the number of tourists going to Cambodia has grown to over 2.5 million at the end of 2010, government data showed.

The Aquino administration is now trying to replicate in the Philippines what Cambodia has done to boost its tourism industry, which was awakened to the enactment of an "open skies" regime that allowed foreign airlines to fly directly to their local home of the region Siem Reap—Cambodia's top tourist draw.

From over three million at the end of 2010, the Philippine government now wants to increase tourist arrivals to as much as 10 million by 2016.

As the latest move, the new CAB gave Cebu Pacific five flights a week from Manila to points of its choice in Cambodia. Two flights were given to budget carrier Jetstar Airways, while AirPhil Express, the low-cost arm of flag carrier Philippine Airlines, was granted seven.

Antonio Jr., the Philippine subsidiary of Malaysia's AirAsia Berhad, likewise received seven flights from its hub in Clark Freeport, Pampanga.

Also, the CAB gave out flight entitlements to Japan, Vietnam and Malaysia.

Principal up 4% to P402 billion, interest down 9% to P252 billion

By Russel W. Domingo

THE GOVERNMENT spent P453.4 billion in the 11 months to November to pay its debts, down from the P468.4 billion settled in the same period last year, according to the Bureau of the Treasury.

The amount spent in debt servicing was considered low as the government enjoyed savings on interest payments.

From January to November, government settled a total of P402.8 billion in principal—P291.6 billion in domestic debts and P111.2 billion in foreign loans.

Total principal payment in the first 11 months was 4 percent higher than the P365.4 billion reported in the same period a year ago.

Also, the government paid P251.1 billion in interest, covering P188.6 billion in domestic debts and P62.5 billion in foreign borrowings.

Total interest payment for the period was 9 percent lower than the P275 billion recorded in the same period of 2010.

In November alone, the government paid a total of P50.9 billion, including P23.1 billion in domestic debts and P8.4 billion in foreign obligations.

The month's total was 24 percent higher than the P38.9 billion seen in the same month last year.

According to Budget Secretary Florencio B. Abad, the government has been spending less on interest payments due to its success in managing debt.

Abad said last week that interest payments mean Amanti to Mercader downsized as a result of the liability management strategy of the Department of Finance.

The strategy also resulted in a lower budget deficit in data, as of end-November, the government spent P86.2 billion on top of the national budget—barely a third of the 2011 budget deficit hovered of P300 billion.

Abad said lesser borrowing costs due to the strengthening of the peso and lower interest rates supported the government's strategy.

The budget chief said the peso averaged at around 43.39 against the US dollar from January to November, one more than the 45.28 reported during the same period last year.

ADAD

'11 budget gap seen at half of what gov't expects

THE GOVERNMENT'S 2011 budget deficit may actually reach P146 billion—less than half of the P300 billion that the state earlier thought it would incur for the whole year as ending in 2010 Group.

In line with this projection, the Singapore-based group now expects the budget gap for December to hit P40 billion.

Also, the deteriorating global growth outlook may compel the Philippine regulators to lower key rates from the original 2012, DBS said in a new research paper, adding that next year's monetary policy now may even average less than that of 2011.

"The full-year budget deficit is likely to be no larger than P146 billion, or 1.4 percent of gross domestic product (GDP), [and] this was achieved amid improving revenues and restraint in spending," the financial services firm said.

The 2011 deficit level is a major improvement from that of 2010, but may not be reported in 2012, DBS explained.

"With a P72 billion stimulus package already announced, the current will likely widen to near P500 billion in 2012," the financial group said. "That would be as large as the current [issue] in 2009 and 2010, but will ever manageable at 3.6 percent of GDP."

In 2009, the budget deficit came in at P299.5 billion, which further ballooned to P314.4 billion in 2010.

For 2012, DBS said that the Philippines would likely keep its key interest rates low in view of the worsening global growth outlook.

The Singapore firm said that the yield of 10-year government securities would probably settle at around 5.75 percent—not below the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas' current overnight lending rate of 6.5 percent.

"If so, interest rates will on average be lower in 2012 than in 2011," the group said.

DBS said that for government bond yields to remain low, it would be necessary for liquidity conditions in the banking system to remain good.

"That should not be difficult to achieve, as the outlook for portfolio flows to Asia in 2012 will turn positive once the sovereign debt crisis in Europe is under control," the group said.

Russel W. Domingo

NGCP issues draft dev't plan

By Amy R. Borro

NATIONAL Grid Corp. of the Philippines (NGCP) has issued the draft of its Transmission Development Plan (TDP), which outlines its programs for the next 10 years to ensure the stability of transmission facilities in the country.

The TDP has been prepared by NGCP—in consultation with concerned stakeholders—to ensure the safe, reliable, reliable, efficient, repair and maintenance of the nationwide transmission system, as mandated by the Electric Power Industry Reform Act of 2001.

"There is a need to augment and strengthen transmission capability to support committed grid. New transmission capacity will be constructed to identified and built before operations and right-of-way become unavailable. The government be upgraded," the NGCP explained.

"A strong transmission network is essential to support the competitive retail electricity market. Old and heavily-loaded substations and facilities which have not been constructed must be expanded and upgraded. The aggressive timeline of new power plants, particularly Renewable Energy, market dynamics and change in technology require new investments," it further said in its TDP.

According to the NGCP, part of the TDP calls for the construction of new transmission projects for the Third Regulatory Period (2011-2015).

NGCP is expected to spend P40 billion in the next five years to further improve the efficiency and reliability of the country's transmission network.

According to NGCP, the issuance of the 2011 TDP was in preparation for public consultations starting January next year.

NGCP is a private corporation responsible for the operation and maintenance of the country's power transmission network.

Possible China slowdown worries PH

By Michelle V. Ramos

THE PHILIPPINES should be cautious not only about the effects of the crisis in the euro zone but also about the possibility of a slowdown in China.

This was according to Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Amando Tetangco Jr., who also said that China, over the last few years, had significantly increased its contribution to the growth of other emerging countries in Asia, such as the Philippines.

A hard landing of China, which has been registering the fastest growth rate in recent years, could have a significant dampening effect on the Philippines.

For one, China is a source of foreign investments. It also has become a major export market for products from the Philippines and other emerging economies.

Latest data from the National Statistics Office showed that in October, China was the third-biggest market for Philippine exports, accounting for P940 million or 14 percent of the Philippines' export receipts for the month.

"China has been a contributor to economic growth of other countries, so if there will be a slowdown there, then the performance of other economies will also be affected," Tetangco said.

Latest data on China showed that in the third quarter, its gross domestic product posted an annual growth rate of 9.1 percent, which is considered very low especially if compared with the annual growth of industrialized countries in the West. The United States has been growing just a little above one percent, while euro zone economies posted below one percent growth.

The 9-percent growth rate of China in the third quarter came after growing by 9.5 percent in the second quarter and 9.7 percent in the first quarter.

There is a concern that the very robust growth rate of China may not be sustainable and may be followed by a downturn or crashing.

That concern is partly based on rising inflationary pressures that came along a growing economy. Rising increases in prices of goods and services, which were caused by increasing incomes and demand, and dampen investments and consumption which, in turn, may cause a slowdown.

Tetangco said the possibility of a hard landing for China could not be ruled out. However, he said efforts of Chinese economic officials to temper the slowdown had been going related to countries that were partly dependent on China.

He said that for the Philippines to avoid substantial adverse effects of unfavorable factors in other external markets, the country should continue diversifying its export markets and its sources of investments.

GOINGS-ON

BDO-led deals cited

THE HONG KONG-based financial publications have cited BDO Unibank Inc. for its participation in two of the Philippines' big-ticket acquisitions and loan deals in 2011.

Finance Asia has recognized Ateneo Consolidated Mining and Development's $900-million acquisition of Cagayan Copper Corp. and named BDO the Best Philippines Deal in the Finance Asia Achievement Awards 2011. BDO, through investment banking arm BDO Capital and Investment Corp., was one of the advisers and deal arrangers of the firm's remaining acquisition.

Asia Southeast Asia, meanwhile, has awarded Ateneo Prime Philippines' $425-million loan the Best Transformational Loan Deal of the Year in Southeast Asia. The lenders were BDO Capital, SBC Capital, HSBC and China Banking Corp.

Pru Life's contribution

IN RESPONSE to President Aquino's appeal to exercise consideration to families and individuals affected by financial storm "Sendong," Prulife Insurance Pru Life UK is providing policyholders living in the hard-hit areas 1-91-day grace period for premium payments. The standard grace period is only 30 days.

This covers policyholders living in Cagayan de Oro, Misamis Oriental, Iligan City, Lanao del Norte and Dumaguete City and Valencia, Negros Oriental, where July health bill data between November 2011 and January 2012.

New Nestle support center

NESTLE Philippines Inc. recently broke ground on a new integrated Coffee Center (ICC) which would be built within the grounds of its operational and development base in Tagaytay City, Cavite province.

The ICC, which will be completed in June 2012, will serve as a one-stop shop where coffee farmers can market or sell their products in Nestle at prevailing world prices. The center will also store coffee farmers' access to high-yielding varieties of the seedlings and advanced planting techniques.

Outstanding CPA

PRICEWATERHOUSE Coopers managing partner and CEO Marivic Espiritu was recognized by the Philippine Institute of Certified Public Accountants (PICPA) as the Most Outstanding CPA in Public Practice for 2011.

The award, which was given to the seven Phoa Bernad National Convention in Subic, recognizes a professional who has made significant contributions to public accounting at the national level through the successful pursuit of a professional practice and the client advocacy to professional excellence standards.

LIFESTYLE Wellness

MARILOU Abaya with Dr Joven Cuanang

How Marilou Diaz-Abaya found health and healing in diving

Text and photos by Bibsy M. Carballo
Contributor

AS WRITER, director, teacher and diver, Marilou Diaz-Abaya has never failed to astound. On every occasion where we have had the privilege to observe her, she has always revealed something new in her persona. We come home from the book launch of her latest project, "Reefs of Paradise, a Divine Gallery," feeling blessed, discovering a holiness, a oneness with the Superior Being we have never yet experienced especially under such circumstances.

When we were done with the picture book she had come up with, in partnership with her medical oncologist, hematologist, bone marrow transplant or stem cell practitioner, diver-photographer Francis Lopez, we felt having gone on a trip and having learned so many lessons from the deep. In Marilou's sparse but incisively comprehensive text, she speaks of how the creatures of the underwater, from fishes to turtles, sea snakes and mollusks live together in "co-dependency," which humans could learn to emulate, for a more balanced ecological and social environment.

Like poetry, her words speak eloquently: "We never to endeavor while all the other creatures, choreographed and orchestrated to silence space and time in harmony, to symbiosis. There is much for us human to learn from reef life."

At the launch, we saw a mingling of actors, film investors, musicians, nature advocates, medical doctors, relatives, friends. We spotted Jaime Fabregas, Jessica Zafra, Marvin Agustin, Sunshine Cruz, Marilou's favorite actor Cesar Montano, guitar maestro Lutrel Delatorilla, art lover and Chief Medical Officer of St. Luke's Dr. Joven Cuanang, Margie Moran Floirendo (the producer Marilou's "Jagunq Stewart"), diver Ma an Hontiveros, who's also chair of the Reef Check Conservation Program, the cast and crew of Marilou's elegy to the sea "Mara Ani," and Marilou's writer-columnist friend Stanly Ibardo.

Favorites

Page after page, while admiring the pictures and digesting the text, we find ourselves returning to certain sections, a particular photograph among the 142 in the book. A favorite of Francis is that of the yellow polyps (p. 81). Tita Cory, the most successful advocate of the color yellow, was his patron. He continues to salute the yellow polyps photo during the last few months of her life. Without verbalizing it, this, too, is Francis' tribute

NEXT PAGE/C2 >

A holiday style guide for sports lovers

THIS HOLIDAY season, give yourself and your loved ones a gift of good health by engaging in sports and fitness activities that will keep you in tip-top shape. And with sports apparel companies turning to top fashion designers to reinvent their lines, you can be fit and fab with fashionable, stunning casual outfits from Nike, adidas and Converse.

Whether you're raising for a big game or just shooting the breeze with friends, you'll want to feel confident with lightweight materials that will keep you on top of hard-court action. You'll also want a great pair of shoes that can protect your joints and help you keep up with basketball's quick-explosive maneuvers.

The Nike Lebron 9 is the first in the signature series to combine Flywire technology and Hyperfuse construction. It also has extra support and cushioning features so you can cut sharper, accelerate quicker and control the court.

Run the distance in a good pair of shoes and lightweight apparel to keep you on your feet and on the road. When choosing a pair of running shoes, keep ventilation, cushioning and comfort in mind. Leading sports brands have also incorporated technology — adidas has ClimaCool, while Nike has Dri-Fit to keep you dry and for better running performance.

Your street sports outfits flow out of the gym into the streets in the late 1980s, they have become a part of mainstream fashion. And today designs are more contemporary and trendy than ever. Mix these jackets, tees and shorts with your regular wardrobe, and then complete your look with cool shoes and bags.

Check them out at Sports Central stores. Also visit our website at www.goorcoe.ph/gift or www.facebook.com/SportsCentral.PH

POWER PLAYER DAVID SEMERAD ADVOCATES HEALTHY LIFESTYLE

Powerade has signed up former NCAA champion basketball player David Semerad as new Filipino endorser to start living a healthy, active lifestyle in 2012. Group brand manager for Hydration of Coca-Cola Philippines Tessa Tomas officially welcomed Semerad as brand ambassador last Dec. 14.

(more)

How to make your new year fitness resolutions work

By Micah Felipe Mendoza
Correspondent

JUST LIKE following a quick fix diet, sticking to a new set of New Year's resolutions often fails as easily as January and most people eventually give up. How can we modify our New Year's resolutions so we can stick to them?

Just like dieting, when making New Year's resolutions, people rely too much on willpower without considering the effort required to accomplish everything, so they end up giving up. There is even a number of people who lose weight during the first half of the year, then struggled during the last part because of "weight-loss resolution fatigue."

According to a 2009 Wall Street Journal article, focusing on numerous resolutions at a time doesn't really work, because one forms counter habits that are hard to break. Thus, it's better to ignore resolutions over the year.

Losing and maintaining weight is not that easy, since it consists of numerous smaller goals (to manage portion control, to improve fitness level, etc.) and others can be as difficult to follow. On the other hand, one loses motivation. People who often fail in resolutions because they focus too much on one aspect, and forget the other important terms, or when they fail in one area, they already feel like a complete failure.

Write everything down

One of the most common New Year's resolutions is to lose weight. But achieving a healthy weight is just one area of your wellness circle. You will need to consider other areas like your emotional, spiritual, mental and social wellness. Analyze your year and identify the areas you need to work on, then prioritize and tackle everything down.

Most people who set weight-loss resolutions give up on their goals when they see the scale is not moving. They end up discouraged.

Try to avoid certain resolutions that involve weight numbers like, "I will lose 10 pounds this year." Do not let numbers on the scale pull you down. Use them to increase your motivation and as a guide to how you are doing, not a measurement of success or failure.

Do not let numbers on the scale pull you down. Use them to increase your motivation, not as a measurement of success or failure

Most people who give up on their weight-loss goals end up forgetting other improvements like limiting food portions and walking for more than 30 minutes everyday. Also, some even undergo quick fix, extreme diets for weight loss. If they don't get their expected results, this process will lead to injuries or health problems.

Dieting and setting New Year's resolutions usually happen at the start of the year, since that is the time when people are less likely to encounter stress. But since January is the only time most will motivate their goals and plans due to weak, lack of time and stress.

Instead of setting general resolutions at the start of the year, like losing weight or quitting smoking, make a weekly plan and a daily resolution, regardless of the date. For example, next week I will make time to exercise at least three times and limit your carbohydrate consumption.

Then your daily resolutions can be fixing your schedule to set time for exercise, and to bring a healthy snack to work. Continue your daily resolutions until they become habits, where one to the next schedule, like adding more vegetables during meals and incorporating strength training in your routine for 15-20 minutes twice a week.

Resolutions, just like diets, often fail because most people unrealistically set goals based on their old thinking. What they don't realize is that they repeatedly set the same goals every year because there are still no resolutions.

If you want to change for the better, you should adapt to the things that happen around you and use them according to your needs. For example, if that resolution is sticking to a new quick fix diet to lose 50 pounds in three months, only to regain weight immediately, then it's time to find weight loss alternatives, like using accountability with people around you, finding online weight-loss support through social networking (Facebook, Twitter, or your own blog), getting a supportive coach, or moving up with like-minded friends regularly to discuss weight loss issues and support each other.

A recent finding of the researchers at Temple's Center for Obesity Research and Education (CORE) shows that text messaging and smart phones among college-age women are effective weight-loss interventions because of the accessibility. It's time to use what's within your reach, what's more convenient and what can be sustained.

E-mail the author at micahfelipe@gmail.com

The MEDICard Health and Wellness Bulletin

Take Charge, Doc!

FIREWORKS SAFETY TIPS

Fireworks go together with celebrating the New Year. Festive as they are, though, fireworks can be dangerous, causing serious burn and eye injuries, and even death. But you can stay safe around fireworks. Here are some ideas on what you can do:

- Never allow young children to play with or ignite fireworks.
- Always have an adult supervise fireworks activities.
- Never place any part of your body directly over a firecracker device when lighting the fuse. Back up to a safe distance immediately after lighting fireworks.
- Never try to re-light or pick up fireworks that have not ignited fully.
- Never point or throw fireworks at another person.
- Keep a bucket of water or a garden hose handy in case of fire or other mishap.
- Light fireworks one at a time, then move back quickly.
- Never carry fireworks in a pocket or shoot them off in metal or glass containers.
- After fireworks complete their burning, douse the spent device with plenty of water from a bucket or hose before discarding it to prevent a trash fire.

TRIVIA:

Did you know that ranchers' sparklers can cause really serious burns? Sparklers burn at temperatures of more than 1,000 degrees celsius! That's more than 10 times the temperature of boiling water, and hot enough to melt some metals! – HFM

Resolve to become healthier

IT'S TIME to take a long, hard look at ourselves and our life. New Year's eve doesn't always end with a long, intense cheer's a much more important celebration awaiting everyone—the celebration of the self and, with it, life!

Here are some of the more popular resolutions, and how they can help you for good:

1. I will eat, drink and be merry for tomorrow, I diet! I will indulge today, because tomorrow I will not eat. This is clearly a justification by the fatty and the underexplained. The idea of indulging already reveals an underlying streak of deprivation. People who indulge are motivated by guilt.

The reason why some need to indulge themselves on certain days is because on other days, they unthinkably enhance by depriving themselves of food. This is the current mentality creating frustrations to plenty from fads to overload. Dieting today and overindulging tomorrow will wreak havoc on our internal system. For one, the blood sugar levels will not remain stable. Already, health experts maintain that the best indicator of good health is steady blood sugar.

Here's the scenario: When you deprive yourself of food through dieting and your body has hunger pangs, your blood sugar crashes. The cross hormones ordered chubby and your body goes into survival mode. The brain sends signals to the body to survive on every calories. And that is why diet without exercise is not the best way to be slim and sexy.

2. I promise to exercise everyday starting tomorrow. Postponing your exercise day is like telling you can do "fewer" sculpting tactics will only contribute to weight gain. Every day that passes without any regular form of activity encourages your body to slow down and store fat. The result: added bulges and pounds.

Exercise is one of the best ways to release your body's natural "feel good" hormones called endorphins. Endorphins are released into your body by hunger pangs, your blood sugar crashes, the

MARILOU'S friends gather for the launch of her book, "Pearls of Paradise, a Divine Gallery."

DR. FRANCIS Lopez, oncologist and photographer

How Marilou Diaz-Abaya found health and healing in diving

From page 17

is her indomitable spirit.

Like Francis, we also have our favorites. Our choice perfectly demonstrates through color and variety the sensation or mingling of God's creatures (p. XII), while another (p. VII, which shows a family of fishes gliding peacefully among corals, is the perfect photograph in terms of sharpness, composition, light source and message. If we were a judge in a photo competition, I would select this as top winner.

Francis started diving with Marilou barely two years ago. "She brought out gusto in practically dive sites in Subic, places I have never seen before... I was simply awed and mesmerized. These feelings flanks one wonder that there must be a God who created these living creatures."

He continued diving at least once monthly with Marilou, taking time out from his medical duties. He explains to persons that diving was his mental break, his means of recharging his batteries, it was her break from themselves, ego, after being diagnosed with breast cancer in 2007. In her intro to the book, she writes: "I am convinced that I've survived cancer this long partly because of the spirituality of diving in between chemotherapy cycles. Each dive somehow detoxifies me..."

It was only natural then both would conceive of a book of praise and thanksgiving for the gift of life underwater that does wonder to them with others, Ma.an Hontiveros, who wrote the foreword, affirms: "I believe that part of a book will inspire divers and respect for our marine ecosystems... as it gives us a glimpse, not just of paradise, of heaven on earth."

Likewise, proponent Francis: "We have an obligation to be stewards of God's creation and respect them as mirrors of 'gifts' that were given to us."

SUNSHINE Cruz Montano, Marilou Diaz-Abaya, Cesar Montano, Marga Holrando, Francis Lopez

'I am convinced I've survived cancer this long partly because of the spirituality of diving in between chemotherapy cycles. Each dive somehow detoxifies me...'

"God Talk music" Lucas Daniello

DISTANCE between Earth and paradise is five meters.

YELLOW perhaps, Dr. Francis' favorite photo

A CO-MINGLING of God's creatures

CORAL reefs as celebrants of the sea

Beginnings

We all know of God's hand in His kingdom under the sea. We know little of how that kingdom came about. We go to the Internet for assistance. We learn that coral reefs, dubbed the Rainforests of the Sea, were formed after the last glacial period, and are less than 10,000 years old. Yet they are among the most diverse and biologically complex ecosystems on earth, supporting 25 percent of marine species. They grow in tropical waters which are clear, warm and shallow near the equator, which includes us.

Each coral colony is composed of tiny animals called polyps, which may found in your place, providing food and shelter to a large variety of species. These reefs provide adjacent coasts with protection from destructive tsunami waves, serve as centers of natural indicators of water quality, prop up economies through tourism, serve as important sources of new medicines. We also learn of how the coral reefs deteriorate and die, many times through man's irresponsibility and greed.

We are reminded as in the old fictions between reefs and needs, and go to Hamlet for clarification. Apparently, reefs are considerations and trouble as giving exactness, while needs is a hope and formation centered with man's providing alone into sometimes. We read from the book that it takes the Creator a year to form corals horizontally from 1-3 cm, and vertically from 1-25 cm. They have been evolving over the past 200-300 million years to become the largest living structures on our planet, and the only living structure visible from space.

From space? we ask astounded. "Yes, reefs, especially the Great Barrier Reef in Australia," continues Marilou, "are the only living structures visible from space."

Darwin's discovery

Interesting. But there is even more to discover. Marilou writers in the book "Darwin is known to have described tropical coral reefs as 'oases in the desert of the ocean.'" Some 500 million years ago, plants and fungi colonized the land from the sea. Amphibians first appeared 364 million years ago; birds, 150 million years ago; mammals, 229 million years ago; hominoids (gorillas and humans), 35 million years ago; and modern man, 0.25 million years ago. However, despite the evolution of these large animals, smaller unicellular organisms continue to be highly successful and dominate the Earth.

In 1841, Darwin published his first monograph entitled "The Structure and Distribution of Coral Reefs" where he set out his theory of the formation of atoll reefs, an idea he conceived of during his trip aboard the HMS Beagle at age 23. He began writing his notes in the Galapagos Islands which so excited him. Darwin's "geologizing" led him to theorize that coral reefs and islands were remnants of a sinking landmass.

Another book, "Reef Madness" by Charles Darwin, Alexander Agassiz, and the Meaning of Coral," talks of the rivalry between Agassiz and Darwin. A famous natural philosopher and scientist, Agassiz believed that the species was created only by his God. This was counter to Darwin's theory of evolution. Both parties engaged in heated personal insults and attacks. We never imagined that scientists could have been this emotional by nature.

Reading the book has opened up marvelous impressions and possibilities, some frightening, some divine. If, indeed, the creatures of the deep evolved through centuries from a single cell or fungus, then it still that organism as to who created that solitary cell.

In book's end, Marilou has written a Seaman's Prayer with this excerpt: "Lord, let me marvel at their teeth resplendent in the colors of salt and light, encrust them in your sculptures, cylinders, tension shades, centipeans, sea horses, lobsters, angel fish, and I sing to your Glory."

for orders and purchase of books, please call Bonnie Francisco: 0907-5693654, 7244678 or 7228698. E-mail bfco_2011@yahoo.com.

Tomato sauce for a healthy lifestyle

DOLE Philippines, along with celebrity chef Jenny Ferris, recently visited Iloilo City last November for the first leg of the Dole Road Show. It was held at The Venue, to launch Dole Tomato Sauce and share recipes that are made much better and healthier with Dole Tomato Sauce.

Attended by representatives from the city's food destinations, the event allowed attendees to taste Dole Tomato Sauce and learn easy to make yet healthy recipes prepared by chef Jeremy Ferris, who held an interactive cooking demonstration. Guests at the event were also treated to a delicious afternoon feast made with Dole Tomato Sauce and Dole Pineapple Slices, complimented by Dole pineapple juice drinks.

The Dole leg of the Dole Philippine Road Show is only the beginning. It will be in Davao on Jan. 26, Baguio on Jan. 27, and Cebu on Feb. 10.

Made from fresh and ripe tomatoes, Dole Tomato Sauce gives maximum nutrients and flavor. Processed through the supervision of Dole Nutrition Institute, one of the world's most respected dietary and nutrition institutes, to preserve its natural vitamin. Dole Tomato Sauce is a good partner to one's wellness activities, as it provides the vitamins and nutrients to help the body be in tip-top shape. The tomato sauce comes in three variants.

Cooked tomatoes found in Dole Tomato Sauce contains five times more lycopene, as it is released from the cell walls during the cooking process, making it easier for the body to absorb. Experts have proven that lycopene contains anti-cancer properties which prevent various types of cancers, as well as other cardiovascular diseases and even diabetes.

Recent studies at the University of Hamburg have also shown that lycopene also provides 33 percent more protection against sunburn. Aside from lycopene, Dole Tomato Sauce is also rich in Vitamin A, C and E—essential vitamins for blocking off harmful free radicals which cause various ailments.

To know more about Dole Tomato Sauce, and Dole Philippines's other healthy products, like Dole Pilot Starbook.

LIFESTYLE Wellness

It was still a runner's year

The sport's popularity was still at an all-time high in 2011, with sports rehab and suspension training among the other trends

By Anne A. Jamboro

ONCE AGAIN, 2011 saw more weekends booked with running events, recording close to 80 major races across the country. That's a lot, considering that there are only 52 weeks in a year.

With the popularity of running still at an all-time high, the Year of the Rabbit saw a few athletic and weekend exercises moving not toward the finish line, but toward the nearest clinic for rehab. Physical-therapy rehab, that is.

But did runners make it to our top-10 list of athletes in 2011? Read on to find out, and take a look back on the fitness/wellness highlights of the year.

• **Lifting off.** It was the year when fitness took off the ground—literally. The art of aerial silk was introduced in the country. Designed to build core strength, ease and flexibility, aerial silk is a new way of challenging—say shocking—your body into a completely different and exhilarating workout experience. A climber wowed in the introduction of Fly Yoga, although this one allows you to keep one foot planted on the floor.

• **Rehab clinics have seen a rise in sports-related injuries, but not mostly from running.** According to the Makati Medical Center's (MMC) Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation center, basketball, being the country's most popular sport, tops this year's cause of rehab sports injuries. This is followed by basketball, athletics, and footwear from its lifting weights in the gym. Tennis and running are also culprits of sports injuries.

While a big chunk of MMC's patients seek rehab for disabling diseases like stroke, about 40 people each month turn to them for therapy for ankle sprain, shoulder strain, knee injuries, finger injuries, and elbow and wrist injuries.

• **It's a successful year for suspension training, when TRX classes were offered in big gyms and were even used for training athletes in schools.** Also featuring in the local fitness scene is Bodyweed Suspension Training, a method much older and more challenging than TRX that goes beyond weight loss, toning and strength training.

Offered in a few sports/performance like Optimo Studios and B+B Studio, Bodyweed is also the choice for rehab for some athletes since it relieves backaches and shoulder problems, and improves the posture.

Overweight Filipinos

• A survey by the National Nutrition Coordination Board in 2008 said the percentage of overweight Filipinos has risen to 20.6 percent from 14.6 percent in 1993. Of that number, 5.6 percent are

(TURN TO P2

RSA Matlack

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TUBAS — BY RINA COLL

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCES DRAKE

ARIES (March 21 to April 19) Assume new finances are on the horizon, especially from the boss. Normally taciturn regarding business with subordinates, this month, higher echelons confide worthwhile tips. (Nov. 20 to Dec. 19)

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20) Romance comes with stellar aspects today and tonight you can feel confident. You're good. Someone might ask about previous liaisons in order to rule out competition and make room for new blood.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20) You're good, but to understand other, especially with partners and close friends. Excitement, optimism and hope is in your future this month.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22) You're as excited as a young girl on Christmas, with Santa. And, like schoolboys and school property. Things will flow more easily than you expect.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22) Be prepared to go more than halfway when dealing with the public today. Assume the best is behind you when dealing with the public today. Assume the best is behind you when dealing with old friends.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22) You can see only a bit of each other's point of view. Don't be afraid to ask for help. Excitement and romance are in your future this month.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22) This is a perfect day for making love and achievement with others. Many matters and potential romances with children, grandparents and relatives might be exciting.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21) Family discussions today and today, especially if you need to draw up leases from the past. Expect to talk to parents and relatives you haven't seen in a while.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21) Discussions with siblings and relatives will be productive today. Don't be overweight and someone may throw an elaborate you into action for some reason.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19) Avoid unnecessary risk and ask whatever problem presents itself to an elder or superior. Don't disappointing to double-cross someone today or somehow. Inquire and discuss!

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18) You're a bit lackadaisical at the other signs today. Avoid the push! Discussions with friends, associates or group members will be advanced positive. (Aquarius is creative.)

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20) Behind the scenes today, romance towards will go well. Whatever you learn, especially about the past, will become powerful. (Pisces are lucky).

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9. For more puzzles go to www.sudoku.com

Answers to previous puzzle

7	4	9	6	5	3	2	8	1
6	5	3	2	8	1	4	9	7
1	2	8	4	9	7	6	5	3
9	1	4	3	6	8	5	7	2
3	8	6	5	7	2	1	4	9
5	7	2	9	1	4	8	3	6
8	6	1	7	3	5	9	2	4
4	3	5	8	2	9	7	1	6
2	9	7	1	4	6	3	6	5

Concepts Sudoku By Dave Green

		5	8			4		
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Difficulty Level ★★

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

ACROSS

1 Quaint
5 Knowledge
10 Vegan (Freddie?)
14 Incline
15 Fortune teller
16 Abnormal sound
17 Cleaning
18 Cleans
19 Unhappy mates
20 Pitcher's stat
21 Lawsuits
22 Light medium
23 Bowling alley
24 Bovine cries
25 Turkey cousin
26 "Use of force"
28 Ex-Mrs.
30 Bullet
31 Coming times
32 Bird's beak
34 Bill
35 Quaint lamp
36 Sound of relief
37 Kind of bed
38 Wild West gang
39 Kind of bed
40 Supervisors (abbrev.)
41 Sprang up
42 Dance organs
43 Fabric measure
44 Holiday quadrilles
46 Ancient Greek
48 Measurements, for short
49 Poetry verse
50 Impressing reluctantly
51 Mid-office (abbr.)
52 Dark tone
53 Kind of school: school
54 Cat's meow
55 Bedtime story(s)

DOWN

1 Bible verse
2 Bird's beak
3 Dancing instructor's
4 Dancing student
5 Distinguish between them
6 Pass
7 Wicked witches
8 Machine learning
9 Cleanliness's neighbor
10 Lower rate
11 Prune
12 Pitcher's stat
13 Pecan
14 Away from the wind
15 Mom's nicknames
16 Sports editor's concerns
17 Non-sensory receptors
18 Contractions
19 Kind of bed
20 Times of
21 Feed grain
22 Preposition to use
23 Ex-Mrs.
24 Tall tales
25 Tall
26 Tall tales
27 Tennis
28 Tennis serve coverage
29 Of living: pref.
30 Kind of bed
31 Kind of bed
32 Kind of bed
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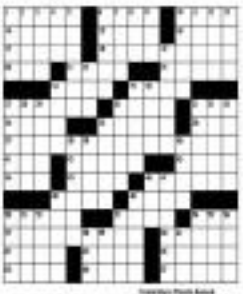

Do you erase memories?

INNER AWAKENING

Jaime T. Licanco

DURING MY many years of serving abroad books beyond earlier science and religion, I have been asked so many nuanced and sometimes difficult to answer questions. Here are two recent ones:

1. Do you erase memories?

No, I don't. What I do is not to make people forget, but, on the contrary, to make them remember.

In the ultimate analysis, nothing is really erased. Everything we have thought of and experienced is recorded permanently in our Akashic record.

The Akashic record is written in "the stuff of time and space," in the psychic Edgar Cayce described it.

Each person carries his own individual Akashic record of everything that has happened to him, from the time he was born to the time he passes on to the next plane of existence, which is the spiritual world.

And it has been shown by Edgar Cayce, who died in 1945, and many other outstanding psychics, like the late Olof Jonsson of Sweden, that one can access the Akashic record of individuals. To a certain extent, we also can access the universal Akashic record through psychometry or object reading.

Not only one's memory in this life-time can be accessed. When given the proper condition and techniques, many individuals can remember their past lives and even find proof for them.

But it is possible to erase one's memories temporarily through hypnosis. I once demonstrated this on a friend who, since then, keeps time taps. A man is hypnotized on camera and is asked to forget the number six. Then he is asked to count the number of fingers on his hands. He counted one-two-three-four-five-seven-eight-nine-ten-eleven. He is puzzled and wondered why he counted eleven fingers.

Then he was asked to count his fingers on the left hand, and he correctly counted one to five. Then he was asked to count fingers on his right hand, and he counted correctly from one to five. Then he was asked to count the fingers of both hands, he ended up counting 11 fingers, because he was ready to forget number six.

Then he was taken out of his trance state and, with a sigh of relief, realized he was not losing his mind. The hypnotist explained to him what he had done with his memory.

Whether particular demonstration were made only for entertainment or for scientific proof are not actually known. I do not know. But there is still, it is possible to do this temporarily.

Is 'kulam' real?

Warding it off

2. Is it (kulam) real? How do you know if it has been cast against a person? And how can one protect it (if)?

What is kulam? I think the eastern English equivalent word for kulam is a "jinx," supposedly cast by witches.

There seems to be some evidence for the reality of kulam in the Philippine countries. Some people were reported to have gotten tickets, lots, however, very difficult to prove conclusively that the malady was caused by kulam.

How do you know if one is a victim of kulam? According to one very famous Filipino healer, we can tell if a victim is due to kulam because the illnesses he feels when diagnosing a patient is different from that of organically caused illness. So it takes a psychic healer who knows how to diagnose this condition to tell whether it is kulam or not.

How do you ward off kulam? If only a mild form of kulam, most people can ward it off by simply having a positive mind attitude and exercise one's self to a shield of golden silver light. But for a very strong manipulation or minds, you have to find somebody who can neutralize or has powers to remove the spell.

Note: For schedule of seminars, individual past life regression, consultancy and paranormal services, please call 8137245, 9159880, 0920-6458862. Listen to my radio program over DZRH every Sunday, 8-9 p.m. E-mail jaime.licanco@yahoo.com, visit my website www.jaimelicanco.com.

Makati gym introduces new managing partner

JOSEPH Nakano, developer/Council on Environmental Affairs and weight management consultant

FIT2 FITNESS Exchange, strategically located in the heart of Salcedo Village, will introduce one of its three managing partners (in a branch) party on Dec. 5.

Joseph Nakano, the Amsterdam Council on Exercise-certified lifestyle and weight management consultant and personal trainer, will be formally introduced as part of the FIT2 management team. He has more than 20 years of experience as a fitness professional.

Several classes and features of the gym will also be highlighted during the event. Guests can expect an evening of fun and action from the dance of Pull Hip Hop, Belly Dancing, '80s Groove, Pole Dancing, Fly Yoga, Muay Thai Pak Kru and Spanking, the Rapid Workout, and FIT2's signature circuit program Circle.

FIT2 is on the second level of The Three Salcedo Plaza, Rufino/Pat St., Salcedo Village, Makati City. Log on to fit2fit.com.ph for RSVP.

Ballet Manila's 'Maligayang Christmas' in Star Theater

BALLET MANILA presents "Maligayang Christmas," a trio of classic and new Filipino choreography including the all-Filipino Dimasalang ballet "Kuntilaw." While the production's recent run at Aliw Theater, "Kuntilaw" is now a regular feature at Star Theater for the holiday season.

Watch "Kuntilaw" today until Dec. 30, 7:30 p.m., and also, 1, 4, 6:30, and 8 p.m. in the Theater. CCP Complex, Pasay.

The full-scale production features the entire company of Ballet Manila serenading scenes that spell Christmas to the Filipino people—it was the traditional Samsung Galo and Noche Buena. In the more recent experience of waiting for loved ones to come home to celebrate the holidays with family and friends after years of overseas work.

"Kuntilaw" features work by Lisa Macuja-Elizalde, Osang Barroso, Paolo Sta. Ana, Sarwelo Francisco, Neni Sinaniari, Michael Divinagracia, Ricardo Mallari, Roman Penaflo and Fred, on the film, and music by Arnold Ibarra.

Call 4923712.

Eastwood New Year countdown

Filipino success and happiness for the coming year and join the whole of Eastern City on Dec. 31, 6 p.m., at the 2012 New Year Countdown happens in Eastwood City. Watch live stellar display and performances by Philippine All Stars, Billy Crawford, Lilyn Quintos, Amber Davis, The Dawn, Gary Valenciano with sons Paolo and Sab, Jaclyn, Eastwood City's own musicals will also be there. Call Eastwood Mall Concierge at 7000000, 7000000 or 09178000111, visit Facebook.com/eastwoodcity or twitter.com/eastwoodcity.

AMAZING AVON CHRISTMAS

Avon gives euro discount with its "Amazing Avon Christmas!" campaign, which also wraps up the company's 120th anniversary celebration. The No. 1 direct-selling company in the Philippines offers scents, makeup, jewelry in time-wear, home products. Avon's current endorsers are celebrity Rhian Ramos and Miss Universe third runner-up Shamcey Supsup. New products include the Little Red Dress fragrance, seasonal fruity scent. Visit www.avon.com.ph.

How to prepare flavorful, healthy meals

THE HOLIDAY 2011 issue of Healthy Options Lifestyle Newsdigest, which is available in Healthy Options stores, is brimming with interesting articles on healthy and delicious cooking.

In Healthy Options Lifestyle Newsdigest publisher Penny Ilet puts it in the Publisher's Page, "Cooking time is quality time. It's your bonding time with loved ones."

Lynn's cover theme the various kinds of cooking oils and the proper use of each one of them in perusing the article "Healthy Cooking Oils." Another good read is "A Season of Cooking with Wine," which lists what wines to pair off with certain foods. Lynn's experience in creating recipes using wine that you may want to try this holiday season. There's also a recipe for crème brûlée, a very dessert which can be enjoyed with a glass of chilled moscato.

Also an interesting read is "Cooking with Fresh Herbs," which highlights how to use fresh herbs like basil, cilantro, dill, parsley, oregano and sage.

Penny Ilet opt for healthy olive oil when cooking adobo and other dishes, or canola oil, but when it's because she knows it tastes so much better, will any of these out for? Arm yourself with useful information by reading the piece "Which is Better—Butter or Margarine?"

Other helpful articles in the round "Cooking Issue" of Healthy Options Lifestyle Newsdigest are "Practical Cooking Tips for Singles" and "Cooking with Kids—It Starts Why It's Important." Take the time to read to find out why steamed foods can be healthier than fried or boiled food by turning the page to the article "Steaming Food to Healthy."

Check out the Kitchen Cutlery Buying Guide for a quick rundown on what to consider when buying kitchen knives.

The holiday "cooking" issue of Healthy Options Lifestyle Newsdigest is available free in various of Healthy Options stores. Visit www.healthyoptions.com.ph.

NEWTON Lady Icon Goddess Trainer

SMITH Optics Prolock V50 Max

A runner's Christmas wish list

RUNNER, THE FIRST world-class running specialty store in the country, has raised the bar in running technology until the emergence of the store in the country with the widest range of equipment and the revolutionary Footmetrix.

A combination of Footprint Analysis, Video Gait Analysis and Custom Insole Molding, the innovative Footmetrix provides customers of all levels with the best gear for their experience, making jogging or running, or whatever they feel results in competition, with improved injury prevention.

The most efficient "natural" running shoes ever produced are exclusively available at Runner. The Reverse 3002 Speed Runner, one of the lightest running shoes—a size 9 weighs just 5.8 ounces—provides greater protection on hard surfaces and cushioned speed.

New Balance Reebok Reebok technology has debuted on the road, and when the technology was used in an off-road version for all types of terrain—the Trail Monstrosity Terrain Trainer—it earned the award for Most Innovative Product from *2011 Triathlon Magazine*.

Runner also recognizes the needs of active women and has brought the Newton Lady Icon Goddess Trainer to Runner Boutique in High Street, Bonifacio Global City, and select Today's Sports stores.

Brik, besides functionality, is also a primary consideration for moms, wives, girlfriends and boss, and a perfect present is the ONE World Apparel Bag.

Balance support, comfort and adjustability with a flattering silhouette are provided by Smith's Prolock system for Optics-point Target of Support Nib high juice each can be updated and re-coated.

Runner offers a wide range of products that can be considered as the perfect Christmas gift," said Runner boutique Toby Claudio. "Prices go all morning and fitness enthusiasts to visit Runner and look for the perfect Christmas gift. We are very sure that whatever running products or brand they need, Runner has it."

Visit www.runner.com.ph

Experts Unite To Provide Relief for Joint Pains And OsteoArthritis

FERN, Inc. and DSM Support POARS

OsteoArthritis (OA) is a debilitating disease that prevents people around the world from enjoying quality of life. This disease affects almost 6 million Filipinos. Alarmingly, the prevalence of this medical condition increases with age, ranging from about 11% of those between ages 45-64 to 68% in those over 65 years of age. Overweight women above fifty with sedentary lifestyles are more predisposed to OA.

Health professionals, pharmaceuticals, over-publishers and government agencies have all done their share in helping those afflicted with the disease. Realizing that OA will be a major health concern, several sectors of society have been addressing the problem in fragmented efforts.

Last November, the Philippine Osteoarthritis Research Society, Inc. (POARS) held their first Annual Convention at the FERN Corporate Center in Ortigas, Pasig City. POARS president, Dr. Cesar Ed. Aimo to make the first ever consensus of what health professionals, consumers and patients, a vehicle to promote a better understanding and care of osteoarthritis. "Through POARS, we can empower patients with proper education. Everybody should be aware of its cause and prevention. Patients must be part of the treatment by giving them options" said Dizon.

DSM's Principal Scientist Dr. Daniel Raederstorff was flown in from Switzerland to grace the event. In a lecture entitled, **"A Breakthrough Solution for Joint Pain"**, Dr. Raederstorff presented clinical studies on FERN i-Flex, a luxury supplement specifically designed for joint health. FERN i-Flex is produced for DSM the world's largest manufacturer of nutritional products and supplements.

The French doctor explained that **FERN i-Flex is safer than Non-Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drugs (NSAIDS) and Cox-2 inhibitors which have side effects**... He stated that FERN i-Flex is more effective compared to Glucosamine and Chondroitin, and further showed that based on **medical research, Glucosamine Sulfate, the most common joint health supplement in the market, poses inconsistencies with regard to its efficacy and benefits.**

FERN i-Flex is manufactured for FERN, Inc., makers of FERN-C, the leading non-acidic vitamin c in the Philippines. It is available through FERN distributors and Watsons outlets nationwide.

(L-R) POARS President Dr. Rene Cator & DSM's Principal Scientist Dr. Daniel Raederstorff

FERN
Visit www.fern-iflex.com or like FERN Inc. Official on Facebook.
Call 982-FERN (3376) for details.

SUSPENSION training, Reformer and TRX

It was still a runner's year

From page B1

obese, and 6.6 percent of children aged 5 years old are also overweight, compared to 5.8 in 2000.

So it's not surprising that the Cohen weight loss approach via blood analysis, despite the P58,000+ price tag, has become so popular among executives. A runner up is the popular Dukan diet, the protein-based nutritional diet by French nutritionist and dietician Pierre Dukan.

• **Getting popular, too, are lifestyle and weight management.** With just seven certified trainers in the country, including former Ironstar contender Tina Jiuan, people who want the traditional sweat-and-exercise method now also demand behavioral modification programs offered by weight-management specialist. Lifestyle and weight management coach Armando Montoya Jr. said enrollees this year have increased by up to 30 percent.

• **As people get more built in every rush year, fitness buffs invested in** state-of-the-art gadgets to keep track of **their mechanics...and to earn bragging** rights, as well. The rest of the fitness pop-ulation, however, opted to stay in the tried-and-true way—hiring personal trainers or mobile phones. Popular apps include the Nike+, Adidas miCoach and Coach in Sky 10K (now free/iOS, free/Sk).

• **Small group workouts have also** become more popular instead of enrolling in expensive one-on-one personal training. At Optimo Studio, enrollment in group classes has soared, and booking must be made days in advance. Why? A group class of two, for instance, immediately saves you about 50 percent of the expenses. (One-on-one personal training might cost your around P16,000 sessions as a group of two, with one instructor, will run you around P8,000.) Unlike large group classes, you also get the instructor's undivided attention so you're always in proper form.

THE COHEN weight-loss approach: Dr Angel Rodriguez-Bandala dropped from 240 to 150 lbs

AERIAL silk

ENTERTAINMENT

Edited by Evanne G. Velarde

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Twitter pool feedback: inquirer.net/twitterpoll/entertainment to 4467

Christmas promo from Odyssey

ODYSSEY Music and Video is giving away free MyPhone dual SIM TV phones and other special discounts with every purchase of a WOW Wakoko Cassette Pro which comes with 2,900 handpicked songs, funky EQ memory and a professional sound modes/boom system. The phone has multiple features such as an MP3 player, TV and FM radio. The promo is on till Jan. 15, 2012.

CHEER FACTOR

TAKE FIVE

Mon David in his element

By Pocholo Concepcion

"THE LUCKY people who saw singer-songwriter Mon David's successful stints with the 4MP Band recently—a benefit for young musician-scholars held at Resorts World Manila's Evening Club; followed by a repeat at the Peta Theater; and another fundraiser for Tropical Storm "Sendong"'s victims, at Shakey's Jazz Kitchen with a quartet—are probably still relishing the high of experiencing these sounds performed exceptionally well by local artists.

David, who migrated to the United States in 2009 and is extending his holiday homecoming, was in his element as he let loose his quirky sensibility in between spirited takes on 3OH!3, Swedesh, Shania, Mangkuno, even Ben King Cole and (we think) plus a number of originals and spontaneous Tagalog lyrics in Movie, Calle-gein and Parker chunks.

The proudly Kapampangan artist took time to chat with the Inquirer via e-mail:

You enjoyed yourself a lot in your homecoming shows. What did you miss most about performing with a local band?

I've known most of the members of 4MP for years, worked and collaborated with them on many projects—including my CDs "Life & Times" and "My One and Only Love." They're the cream of the crop, so you're talking very high musical standards here; both in studio and live performances. They continue to inspire me as a musician and I miss all the jokes with the schoolmates on the side. Always intrigue didn't skimz me eh ang respect as bassist ne. And of course the most important aspect is when we can collectively bring the quality of the music to a higher level and involve the audience in the process. The result is a wonderful experience and a swinging lovely vibe!

The songs you performed had a tremendous power to transport the audience to the past, but without the "corny" feeling of nostalgia. Have you always been aware of that power of music?

MORE PHOTOS E2

AT SHAKEY'S Jazz Kitchen (from L): Mer Bacon, Collie de la Calzada, Tots Tolentino, Mon David and Mars Lopez (JOHN GONZALEZ)

What Sitti and Pooh have learned in the biz so far

SITTI praises us she ponders our questions: What has she learned so far in an industry that has rewarded her for unrelentingly bringing back the bossa nova trend 10 years ago?

The singer thinks hard before opening up about her frustrations instead: "I don't actually like being labeled as just a bossa nova singer," she says, adding that she herself wrote two songs that deviate from the genre in her latest self-titled album.

She cites two more causes of her frustrations: Radio doesn't play her songs, especially those from her new CD, and she feels the need to further develop her self-confidence.

"But I'm more in control of my career now," she declares, pointing out that her management, Bricktoons Inc., gives her the freedom to make personal decisions.

In fact she was the one who asked another Bricktoon artist, the comedian Pooh, if she would have the Music Museum as venue of her concert—because both of them are doing shows on the same date, Dec. 29.

Pooh was accommodating enough to agree, picking the Metro Star in Quezon City for his own venue.

He has every reason to be kind and happy these days, he says, because he has just finished paying for his own condo unit.

SITTI

POOH

"Tanggap ko na, para hindi malaki ang inis ko."

As far as lessons learned in the biz are concerned, Pooh says two things stand out: good interpersonal relations and dealing with challenges.

He explains: "Makuto sakong makisama ... dahil sa pagod ako sa trabaho. At sa lahat ng competition or kumonkurso ang ang challenge ko yung hindi ako basta nagbibitaw ng chariot among) pumeh lose ... Jhe kind so comedy ha si ni TC."

MORE E2

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What Sitti and Pooh have learned...

Front page 01

Pooh, who has succeeded to make the jump from doing stand-up in clubs to acting on the ABS-CBN gag show "Banana Split," cites two foreign comedians—Russell Peters and Kathy Griffin—as his idols. "Any gutsy talaga sila magpatawa. Ayaw nilang pretty people."

He says he believes that a good comedian doesn't have to insult a member of the audience to get a good laugh, adding that he'll rather make fun of himself to achieve the same result.

(The concert "BOLA: Mga Bagong Kuwento" will be held Dec. 29 at the Music Museum with guests Brigada, Bassist Bayan and Marise Shawcross. The comedy show "Pool Live" goes on stage on the same date at Alavo Bar with guests Jason Gainza and John Prats, among other surprise artists.) Pinabeth Gonzalez

Mon David in his element

From page 01

Oh yes, very much. It's the same power that keeps me going ...God keeps me inspired. To me, music, along with poetry, has the highest and deepest capacity to do that ... Otherwise, these pieces would not be part of my repertoire. A song has to touch me in my heart before it finds its way to my lips and becomes a passionate hymn. When that happens, it excites me even more to share it with the audience. That's how I build a repertoire—the parts used to really should express my visions not only to a musician public to ...

READ MORE ON E2

Super Junior grabs top overall chart

TOP SELLERS: Albums in the country for the week Dec. 12-18, based on Gilmyr Music & Video's nationwide sales reports:

Overall

1) Super Junior, "Mr. Simple," Universal Records; 2) Various Artists, "Feel ... Christmas," Sony Music; 3) Various Artists, "It's a Wiki Wiki Christmas," Sony Music; 4) Soundtrack, "Ber. Months, Mo Money," Polyeast Records; 5) Michael Buble, "Christmas," Warner Music; 6) Super Junior, "Supershow 3: Live," Universal Records; 7) Jacklee Barbers, "Under The Mistletoe," MCA Music; 8) Taylor Swift, "Speak Now: World Tour Live," MCA Music; 9) Angeline Quinto, "Thirsty Aug. Fingerprint," Star Records; 10) Codes, "My Christmas Wish," Universal Records

OPM

1) Various Artists, "It's a Wiki Wiki Christmas," Sony Music; 2) Soundtrack, "Ber. Months, Mo Money," Polyeast Records; 3) Angeline Quinto, "Thirsty Aug Pan gasing," Star Records; 4) Codes, "My Christmas Wish," Universal Records; 5) Ann Mari Chua, "Christmas In Our Hearts," Universal Records; 6) Various Artists, "Non-stop Pilipino Kine-Disco Jamin Part," Gilmyr Music; 7) Various Artists, "Smooth Christmas," Gilmyr Music; 8) Anne Curtis, Sarahniyan," Viva Records; 9) Various Artists, "Da Best Ang Feeling By Pilipino Mini Records; 10) Jed Madela, "Awake Again," Universal Records

odyssey MUSIC & VIDEO

JOSE Mari Chan No. 5 OPM

HOMECOMING pop sensation Mon David swings with the APO Band at the Pete Theater in Quezon City

Mon David in his element

Photographs By

Mon David swings for the fifteens playing, styles and arrangements, etc.) for him as an artist when it comes to creative, keen and has been.

You've been away for quite a while. Did an album life in the United States have kept you busy there.

I've been exploring the jazz scene for the past four years now (particularly LA and San Francisco). I'm loving it. Most recording jam artists and musicians from all-breed parts of the globe—everyone's showing their unique styles and capabilities, which is so inspiring! I've been fortunate to have had the opportunities to perform in various festivals and prestigious jazz venues like Jazz Gig Catalina, Yoshi's, the Blues Blue Whale, Culver Jazz Room, Sweetness Jazz Club, etc., and to set courses like The Real and Lucius. I'm enjoying this part of my journey. On the side I conduct singing lessons while I continue to learn from colleagues. Or, the whole managing, marketing, studio/guitar mastering on myself. There's that "studio" balance/sweet quality in it as ways, I guess, [my studies] are doing [what] it's doing.

Why did you migrate? How was over-regretted it?

That desire to continue exploring, expanding, scaling has always been in me. One will never see the contours of the ocean if he's not willing to lose sight of the shore, said wise one. I can relate to that thought, which is very just in a sense. There is risk-taking involved (moving unprecedented) and you have to glimpse into it sometimes with eyes closed to discover new exciting things! It's this caution that will allow you to grow that "frogs can't make" have seeing journey for re-grow.

Your children are now studying and making music or saying part to Manila to pursue music careers. How did they discuss this with you?

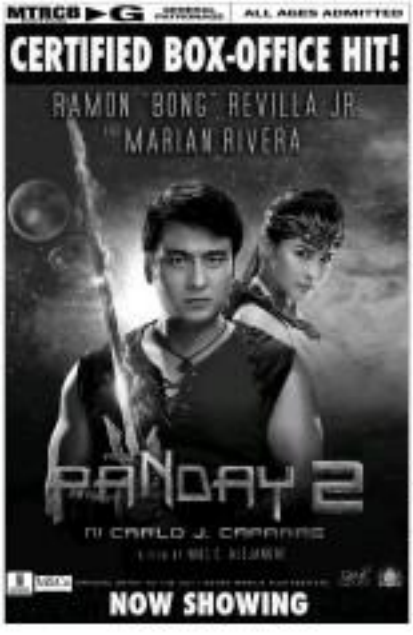
After trying it out in LA for more than a year, they both decided to re-establish their careers in the Philippines. Feeling why America was not for them. I guess for young [re-grow]ers, or ages of 20 she thinks to leave their comfort zones, become on their own handling their own stuff, while in-[re]porting favorite careers. We, as parents, respect their decisions. We will always support them. I keep reminding them it's not an easy life, but it's a rewind in itself when you're honest and sincere about it.

Do you keep abreast of the music scene at home? There have been two new hits lately and a lot of bands

had the opportunity to [re]ord and network with each other.

I'm happy to hear that. Sometimes homegrown talents don't see long any just joint, against you may spur us one? Musicians should [re]ognize [re]ognizing these pieces.

What keeps you happy these days?

It's your joy to see your friends and Gods and my children lady, their most Professed me here so Mike, wooing with their cooperation, and I can't [re]ember any song to them. "Here 'tis' my [re]ponse. [re]phrasing my [re]ponses from 'I've my [re]ponsing [re]ponses here as mine. do my [re]ponses."

Nothing can replace that [re]lationship, in the song goes. We my children grow and evolve, my dreams come alive..." The other thing that keeps me happy? Learning a new tune that moves me.